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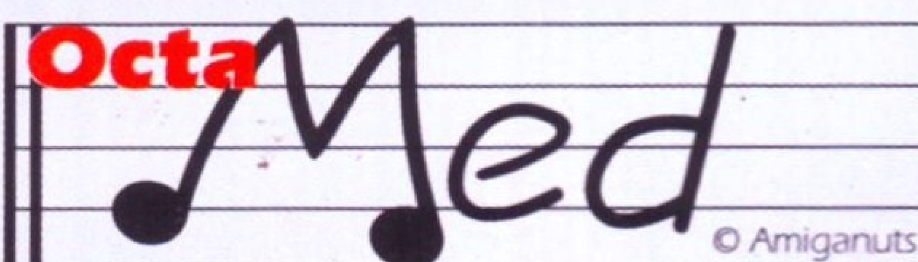
Massive 260 Page Issue

AMIGA FORMAT

ISSUE 29 ■ DECEMBER 1991 ■ £3.95

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AMIGA FORMAT



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COVER DISK 29

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Blues Brothers



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Real Things

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NO COVERDISKS?
THEN ASK FOR THEM FROM YOUR NEWSAGENT

Inside the new Amiga

You've heard the rumours: here's the facts! Read our hands-on review of the A500 Plus and find out if the arrival of Workbench 2 and the ECS has the power to change your world...

PLUS the best in hints, tips and advice
Workbench p213
Gamebusters p137
Beginners p239

THE BIG GAMES ARE COMING: Lotus 2, Robocod, Terminator 2, Battle Isles, Volfied, Blues Brothers
GET PUBLISHING: word processors with graphics all tested, rated, recommended and explained
HARDWARE: which second disk drive is the best?

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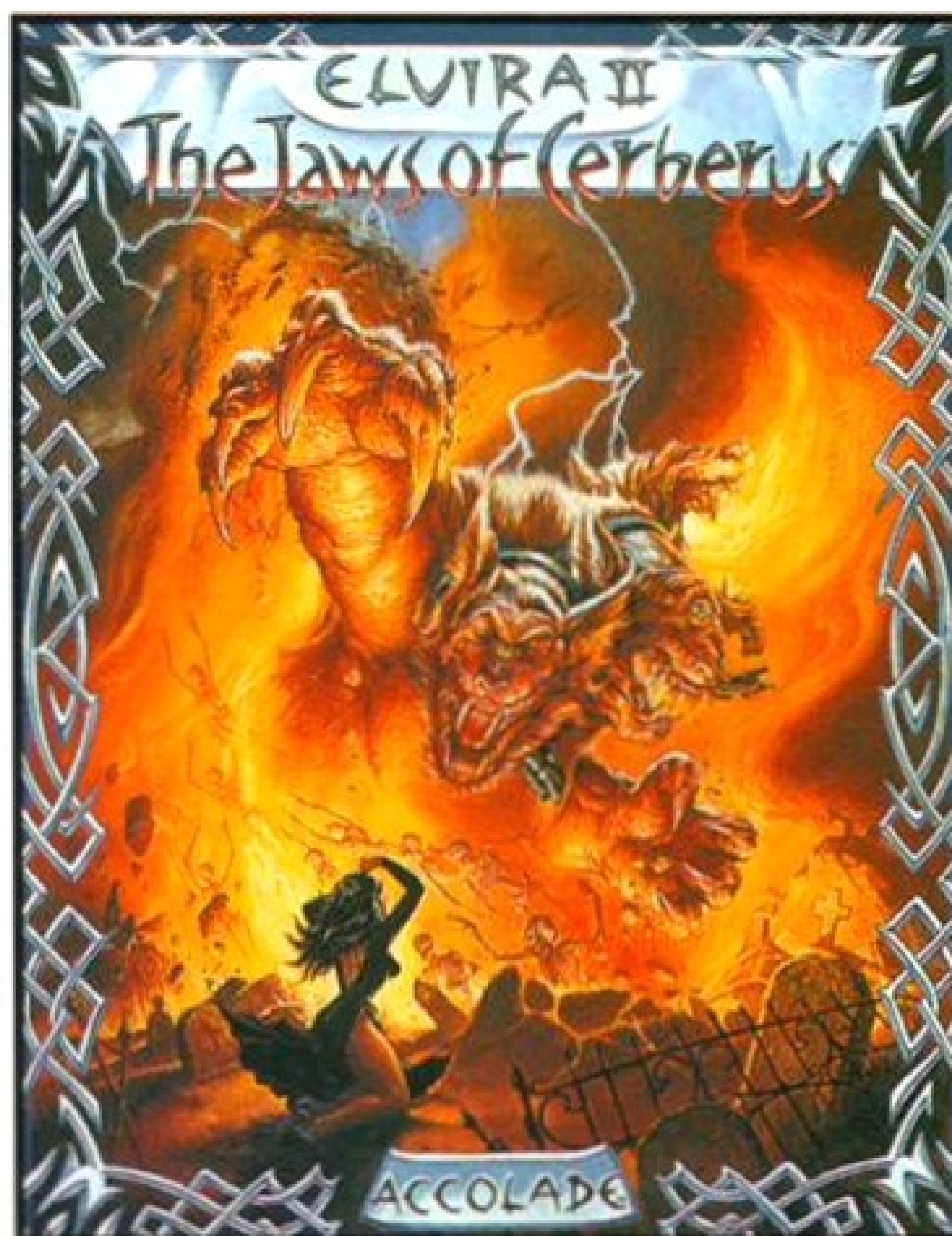


THE SOLUTI
WHEN YOU KNO

The combined atomic weigh
osmium, lead, argon, dyspro

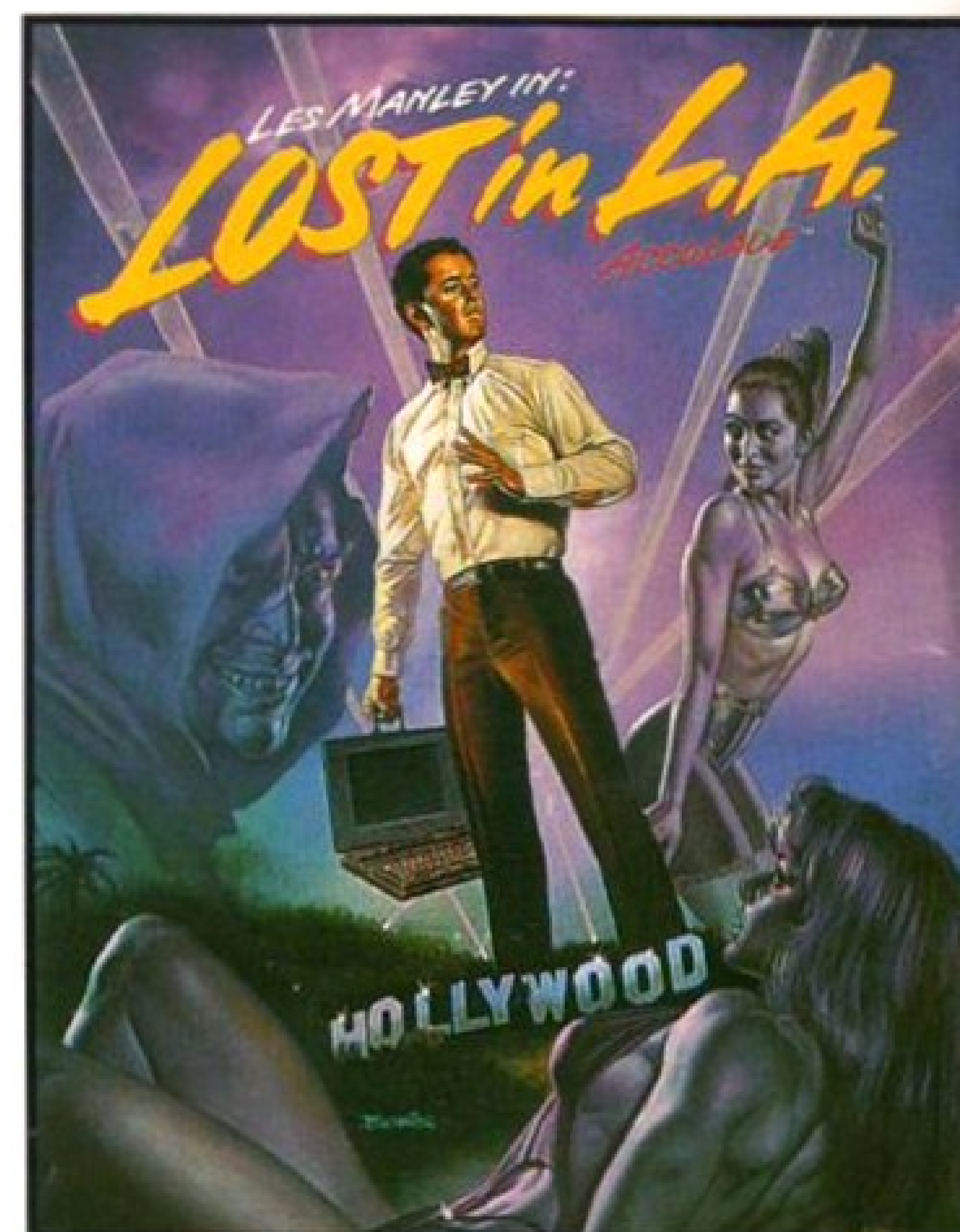
What is the significance of

Fancy a challenge? Then get your home computer and IQ ready for a real bashing as you tackle these mind bending, hair pulling classics from Accolade. Whether you're planning a heroic rescue of our beloved Elvira or planting spies amongst enemy camps in Stratego - if it's mental gymnastics you're after, then read on....



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Elvira's game .... are you ?
The incredible sequel to the blockbusting Elvira® - Mistress of the Dark™. Now over five times bigger, you begin an enthralling fantasy quest to find and rescue the Queen herself from the clutches of Cerberus - the 60 foot tall three headed demon with a decidedly mean streak.
Think before you answer, she's out there somewhere, but without nerves of steel and an inquisitive mind - you're in big, big trouble.

RELEASE DATE : JANUARY 1992
Available on : IBM PC, Amiga, Atari ST



LES MANLEY IN: LOST IN L.A.
He found the world's greatest entertainer in the classic adventure "Search For The King" - now Les returns in true style with Les Manley in: Lost In L.A.
Hollywood celebrities are disappearing fast but nobody knows how or why! Capture glimpses of Californian high life and bodies beautiful as you and Les revel in this great whodunnit mystery.

RELEASE DATE : NOVEMBER 1991
Available on : IBM PC

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Accolade Europe Ltd., Bowling House, Point Pleasant, Wandsworth, London SW18 1PE.
Tel: 081 877 0880.

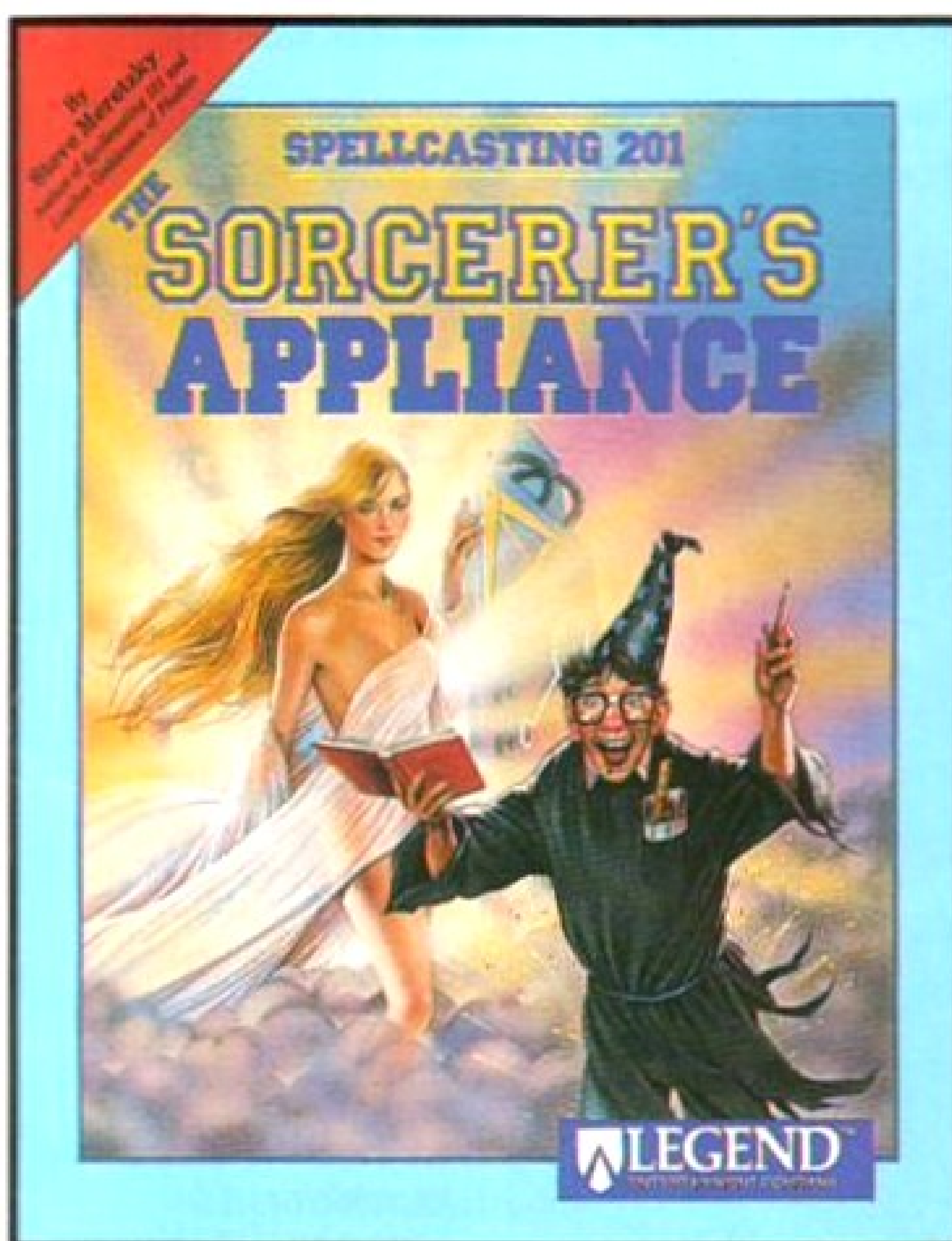
DANGER: Playing these games with a lov

ON IS SIMPLE

W THE ANSWER

of actinium, chlorine, cobalt, um and erbium is 1088.4842.

is combination of elements?



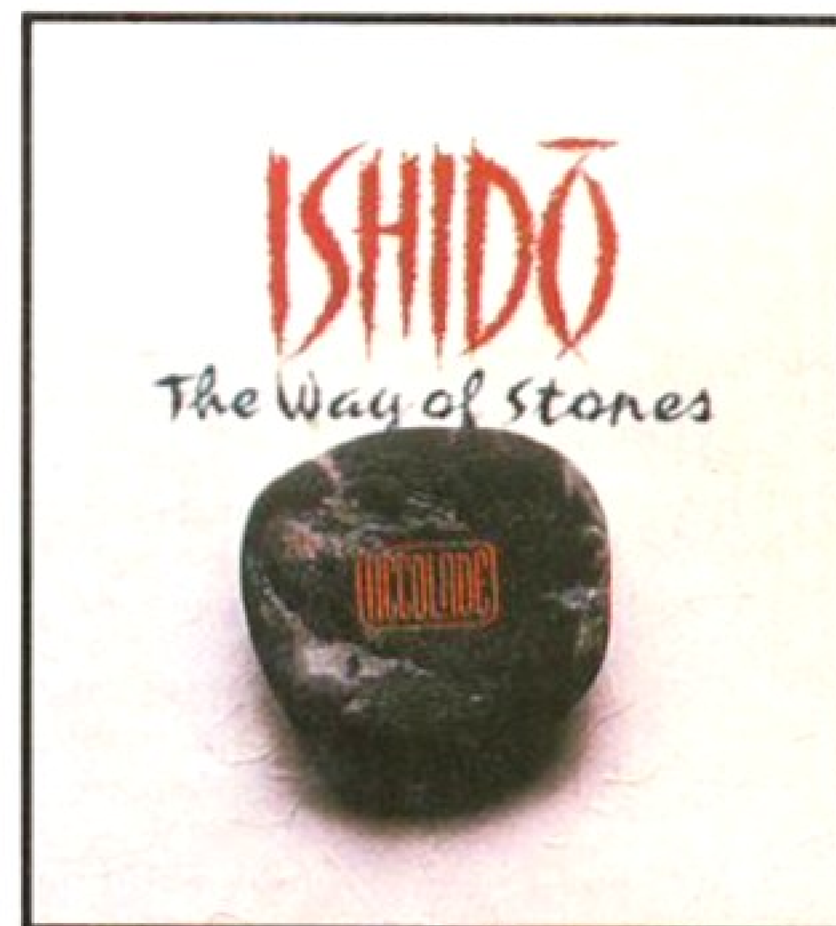
SORCERERS APPLIANCE

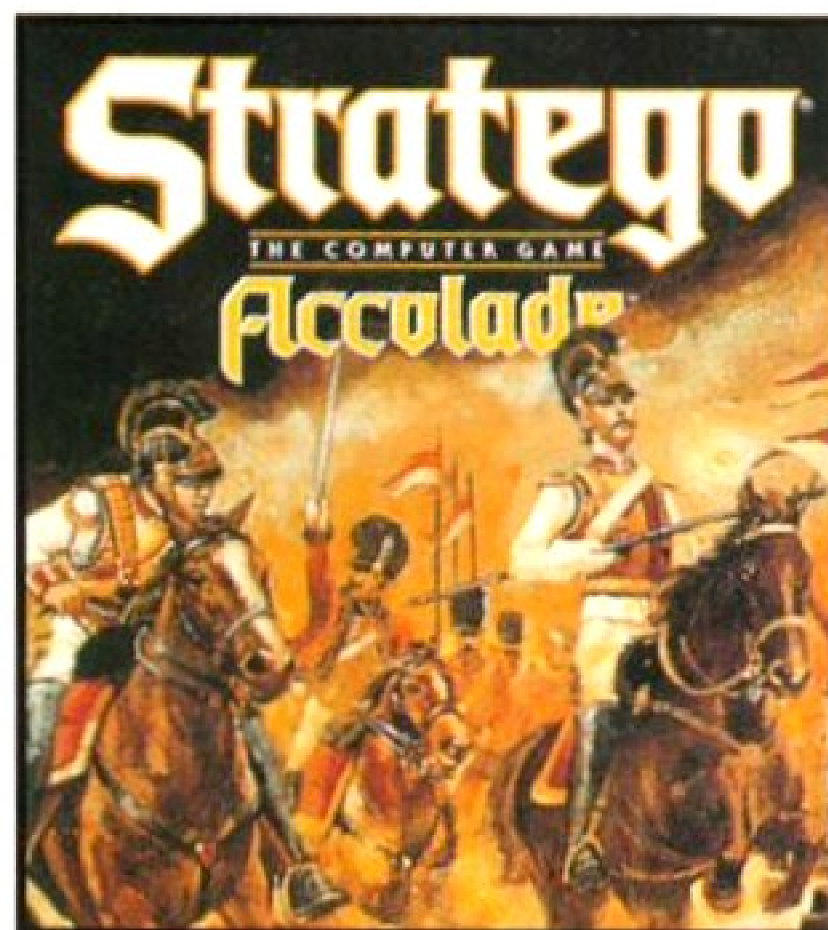
Hallowed Halls give way to naughty nights in this great new animated adventure for nerd of nerds Ernie Eaglebeak. Joining a fraternity introduces him to HELL WEEK and a series of outrageous rituals for his initiation. To pass the course you'll need to cast the ridiculous spells, solve mindbending puzzles and "interact" with gorgeous women.

Available now on : IBM PC

ISHIDO: Call upon your deepest powers of concentration as Ishido - The Way Of Stones returns to the world after thousands of years. This ancient game provides one or more strategists with the ultimate challenge - where you will meditate and deliberate over every move. Ever heard of "a minute to learn, a lifetime to master?"... Then watch out for Ishido.

Available now on IBM PC, Amiga





STRATEGO®: Experience the intensity of true combat .... Stratego® captures all the thrills of the classic battlefield board game. Deploy your army, plan your advance, attack and capture the enemy flag - the objective sounds simple, but one confrontation with the computer or your friends and you'll see why Stratego is called "the greatest battlefield strategy game of all time." Available now on : IBM PC, Amiga.



ALTERED DESTINY: He's steady, he's reliable, good old P.G. Barnet sits in front of the T.V., relaxing with a bowl of popcorn. Little does he know his world is about to take a dramatic turn as he is literally sucked through the screen into a fantastical alternate world. Now it's up to you and P.J. to solve problems unlike any other encountered. If you fail, it's simple - you'll never return again to the normal world of T.V. and popcorn.

Available now on : IBM PC, Amiga

I.Q. can seriously damage your sanity

ANSWER: A.C.C.O.L.A.D.E

AMIGA FORMAT 29
DECEMBER 1991

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AMIGA FORMAT
30 Monmouth Street
Bath, Avon, BA1 2BW
Telephone 0225 442244
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Turn to Page 198 to find out how to get 'em!

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Quote of the month:
"If I'd wanted your opinion, I would have told you it"

Member of the Audit Bureau of Circulations.
ABC Registered Circulation 115,158 Jan - June 1991

Every month in Amiga Format

It's always nice to have something in life you can rely on and if it's not a Golf GTi, at least it can be the regular monthly sections in **Amiga Format**

News 9
Up-to-date info on happenings on the Amiga scene, from developments to the Amiga range itself to new software and hardware. It's all happening this month…

Gamebusters 111
If you're stuck on a game and you need help, here's where to look. You can even write in and ask for help on particular games. Big this month: Elvira solved

PD Update 161
Public Domain (PD) software costs practically nothing and there's more of it appearing all the time. We pick out just the best from all the new freebie releases

Workbench 213
Read this and learn: your techie questions answered and your own expert advice passed on to others. Answerfile this month looks at the A500 Plus

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Check out a few of the special bargains on offer

Letters 233
Poke a nose in the business of other Amiga owners

Win amazing new Philips hi-fi! 209
In this month's £1,000 competition Philips offer exclusive prizes from their brand-new hi-fi range: enter now!



In NEWS

An exciting new range of hardware is launched by US supremos GVP, including the IV24 video board. PLUS details of the new packs for the Amiga 2000 and 3000



GAMEBUSTERS

Stuck on Elvira? You're not alone! If you're having problems completing the game, check out Gamebusters for tips and cheats on this game and many others…

REVIEWS

Every month, we bring you the best reviews of the most up-to-date releases in all things serious, from new hardware to creative and utility software. This issues's line-up:

Techno Amiga 161
Check out a brand-new and innovative idea: a fun and educational electronics kit that plugs into your Amiga

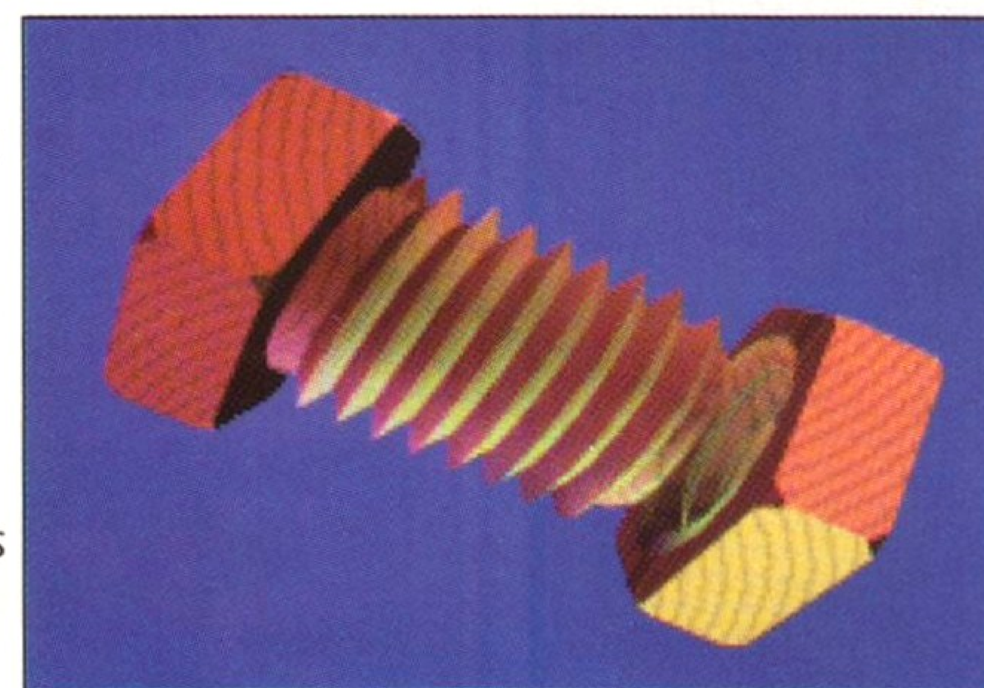
Draw 4D Pro 164
If you want to be at the sharp end of Amiga graphics, it's the latest in 3D modelling that's making waves…

Real Things animations 168
Take a step forward in realism with the latest in this series of life-like animations from the natural world

Scenery Animator 172
Don't miss out on one of the most enjoyable areas of Amiga graphics, as fractal landscapes hit new peaks

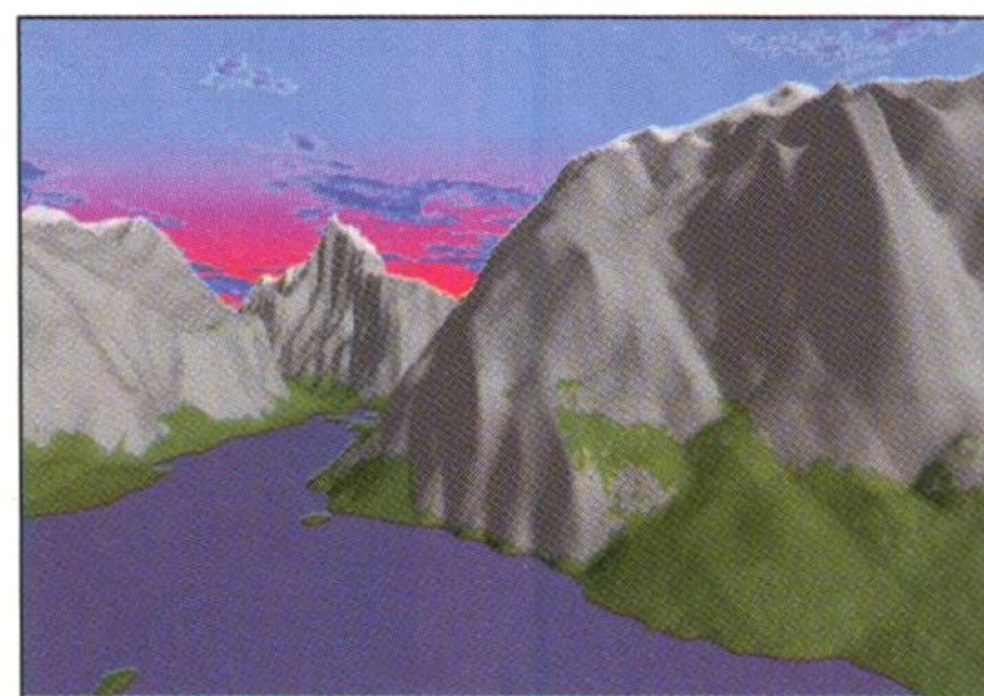
Dr T's KCS version 3.5 178
Get down to the funky beat! It's dancing shoes time as the best professional music program ever arrives

Audition 4 181
Better than Audiomaster 3? Anyone who has a sampler should be looking out for this new software



DRAW 4D PRO

It's been a big year for 3D modelling programs and this is just the latest in a line of excellent graphics software. Is it also the best? Find out!



SCENERY ANIMATOR

If you've never seen what a fractal scenery generator can do, have a look at this. It's a lot of fun

Loose and Floppy p217

If you don't already own a second floppy disk drive, there's plenty of reasons why you should

So whether you already have one which you want to replace, or you're looking to get your hands on one for the first time, what you need is our complete guide to every floppy disk drive on the market

As well as reviews and ratings of every model so you can pick the best, you'll find heaps of insights and information that will increase your understanding of what you're paying for when you get a floppy drive

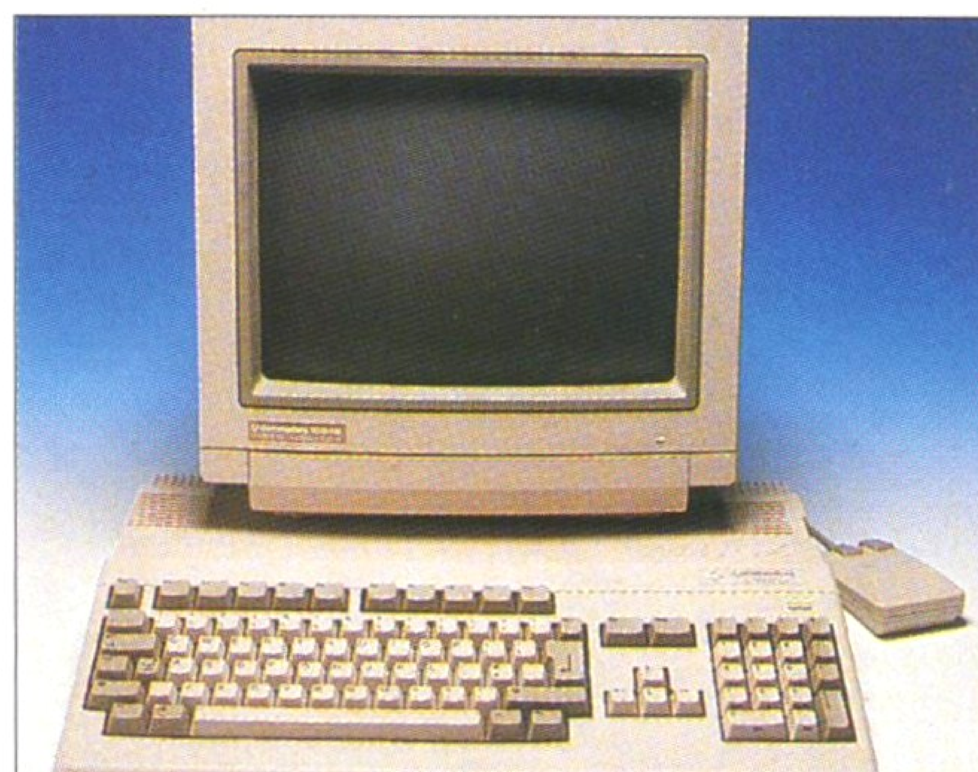


LOOSE AND FLOPPY

There's a huge choice of floppy disk drives on the market, so if you're thinking about buying one you should see what we think of them first!

Inside the new Amiga p32

You've heard the rumours: but here's the facts on the biggest advance for the Amiga ever.



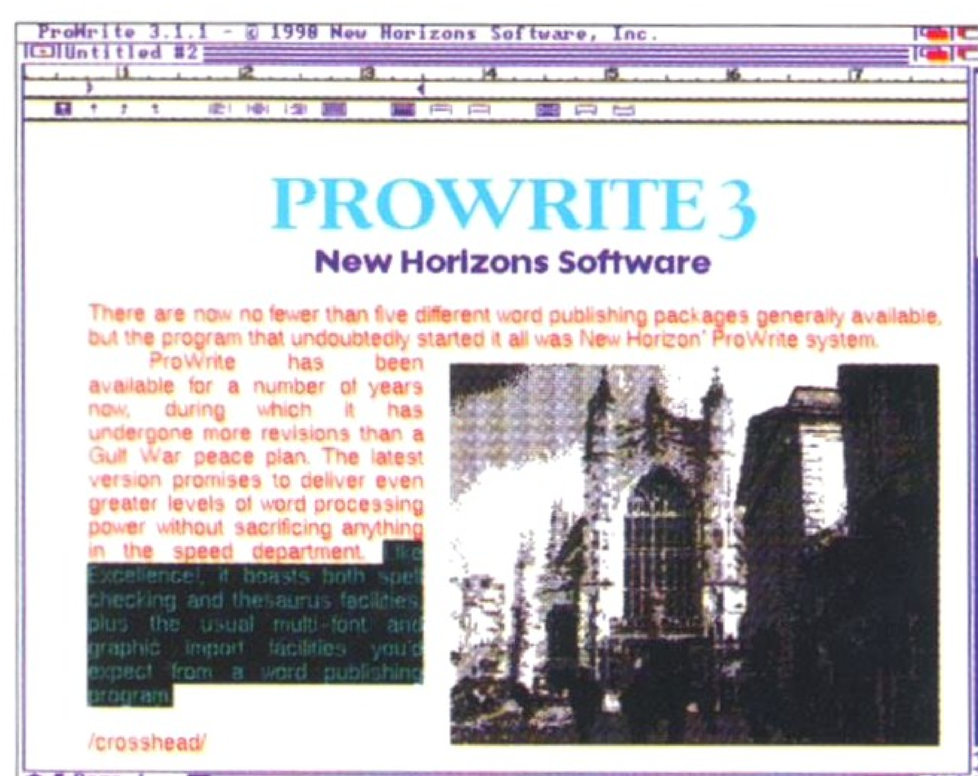
There's a brand new model in the range called the A500 Plus: we rip one apart and tell you exactly what's inside the newest Amiga and what it means to you.

And as Workbench 2 and the Enhanced Chip Set arrive on every model in the range, it's an enormous step on for every Amiga owner. But there are many questions.

How good is the new Workbench 2 operating system? What are the problems with it? And how do you go about upgrading? All the essential information is here.

Are you in the picture? p41

Do you know that word processors with graphics are currently the fastest-growing and biggest-selling kind of software outside games?



More people are intending to buy a word processor than any other kind of serious software, and the majority of word-processing programs now include pictures too.

For the first time anywhere. we test them at what they're supposed to do: not just write words, but also design and print out whole finished pages.

So if you've been considering buying a word processor or even if the idea never crossed your mind, read and learn.

SCREENPLAY

The monthly games section that's better than a games-only magazine!



Previews 57

Kicking off Screenplay with a look at the games you'll be playing next month and the month after. Biggies this month are two 3D adventures: Mercenary 3, sequel to the smash hit Damocles, and Space Crusade.

FORMAT GOLDS

The top games that earned the coveted award this month

Battle Isles 68

Robocod: James Pond 2 80

First Samurai 94

REVIEWS

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Face-Off 84

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Outrun Europa 90

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Last Ninja III 104

Terminator 2 107

Super Space Invaders 110

Lotus Turbo Challenge 2 114

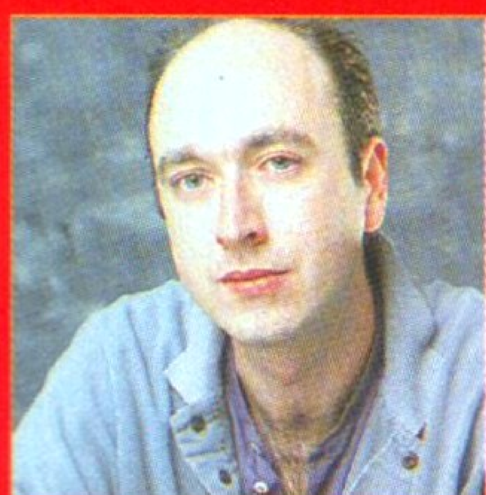
Pegasus 118

Knight of the Skies 120

Screenplay 'Outro' 125

Regular look at the top-selling UK games with the charts, plus reviews of the Bug (an excellent new joystick), Mega Twins, Seven Colours, Turrican and the Charts

Welcome to Amiga Format!



If this is the first time that you've come across Amiga Format, then welcome to the world's most popular magazine for Amiga owners!

Every month we aim to deliver the most complete picture of the Amiga scene, so whether you're new to the computer or an old hand, there's plenty in here that you'll find both useful and enjoyable.

Every month, there's news and reviews of everything that's new not only on the games scene, but also in the way of hardware and in what we call 'serious' software: useful stuff like word processors, creative stuff like graphics and music programs and practical, useful utilities. And there's PD Update, which picks out the best in free software.

You'll also discover special sections of the magazine that are set aside for helping you with your Amiga-related problems: Gamebusters for game-playing cheats and hints, Workbench for any techie hassles that you're having with the Amiga, your hardware or software.

And there's our special features, introducing new areas of the Amiga, comparing and picking out which are the best in specific types of hardware and software, and lifting the lid on things you'd always wanted to know about.

And don't forget that when you pay the usual price of £2.95, every month that includes your action-packed Coverdisk containing demos of the latest and greatest in games and 'serious' software as well as much more.

But don't forget to look out next month for the bumper Christmas edition, a very special issue of *Amiga Format*

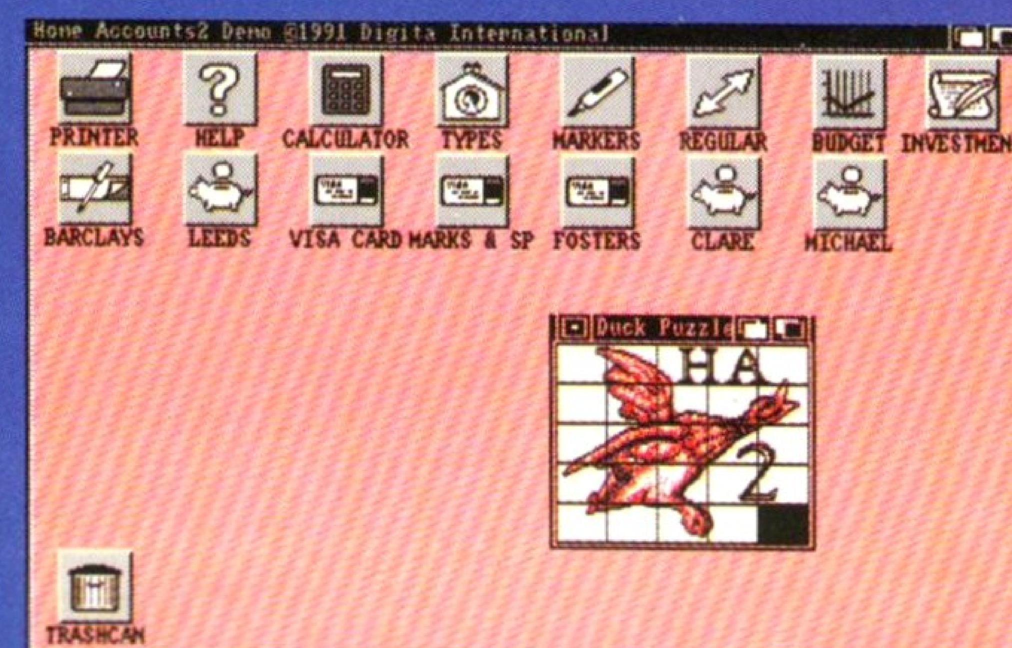
Coverdisk p21

The Blues Brothers



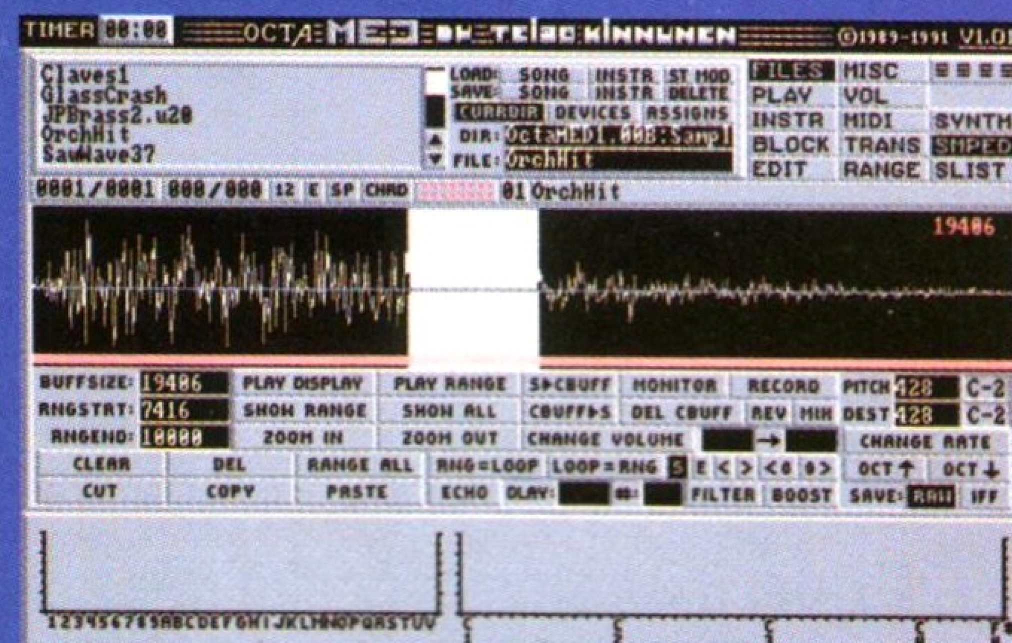
It's the film licence they've all been talking about! Any number of games magazines have already raved over the fun and playability of Titus' tongue-in-cheek platform game, but this is your first chance anywhere to try it for yourself. All together now: "We got a full tank of gas, half a pack of cigarettes, it's dark..."

Home Accounts 2



We're on a mission from Barclay's, to coin a phrase. This fully useable demo of Digita's completely updated home finance program will show you how easy it is to keep track of your personal affairs, as well as giving you the definite impression that The Ducks are Not What They Seem...

OctaMED p143



The complete guide to using your music software

OctaMED Version 1 is the most widely-praised inexpensive music software there is, and you don't need expensive music kit to use it! Normally it costs £10, but we've been able to bring you it for only the price of a disk. Full instructions and a quick-start guide to making your own tunes appear on Pages 143-146.

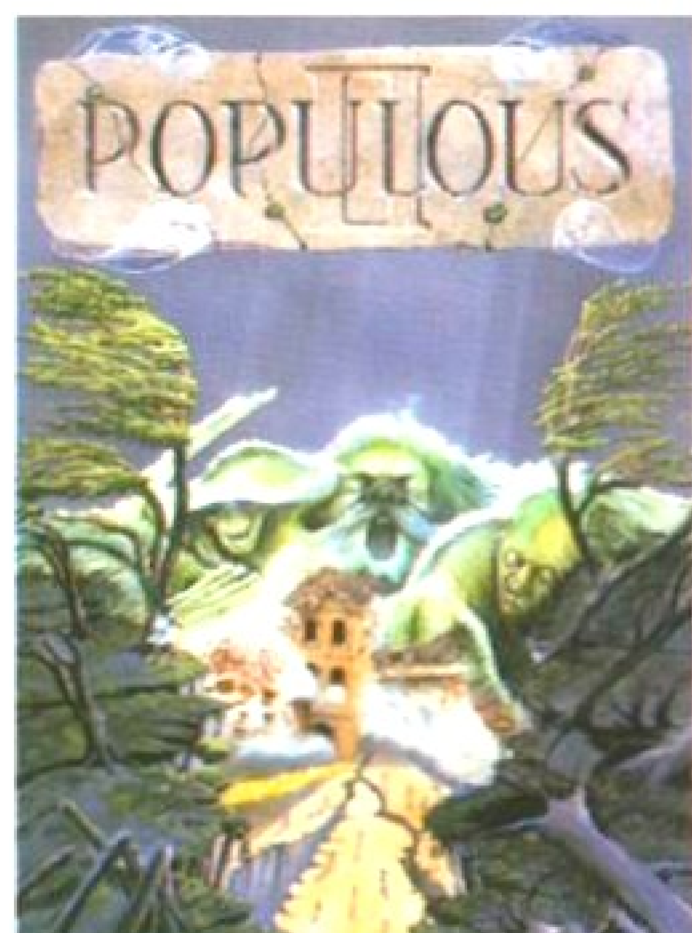
Important announcement

Please note that the Real Things animbrush promised on the Coverdisk label could not actually be fitted on the disk due to last-minute technical problems, a situation for which we apologise profusely. It will appear on the Coverdisk of the next issue.

THE GODS ARE BACK AND ALL HELL IS ABOUT TO BREAK LOOSE

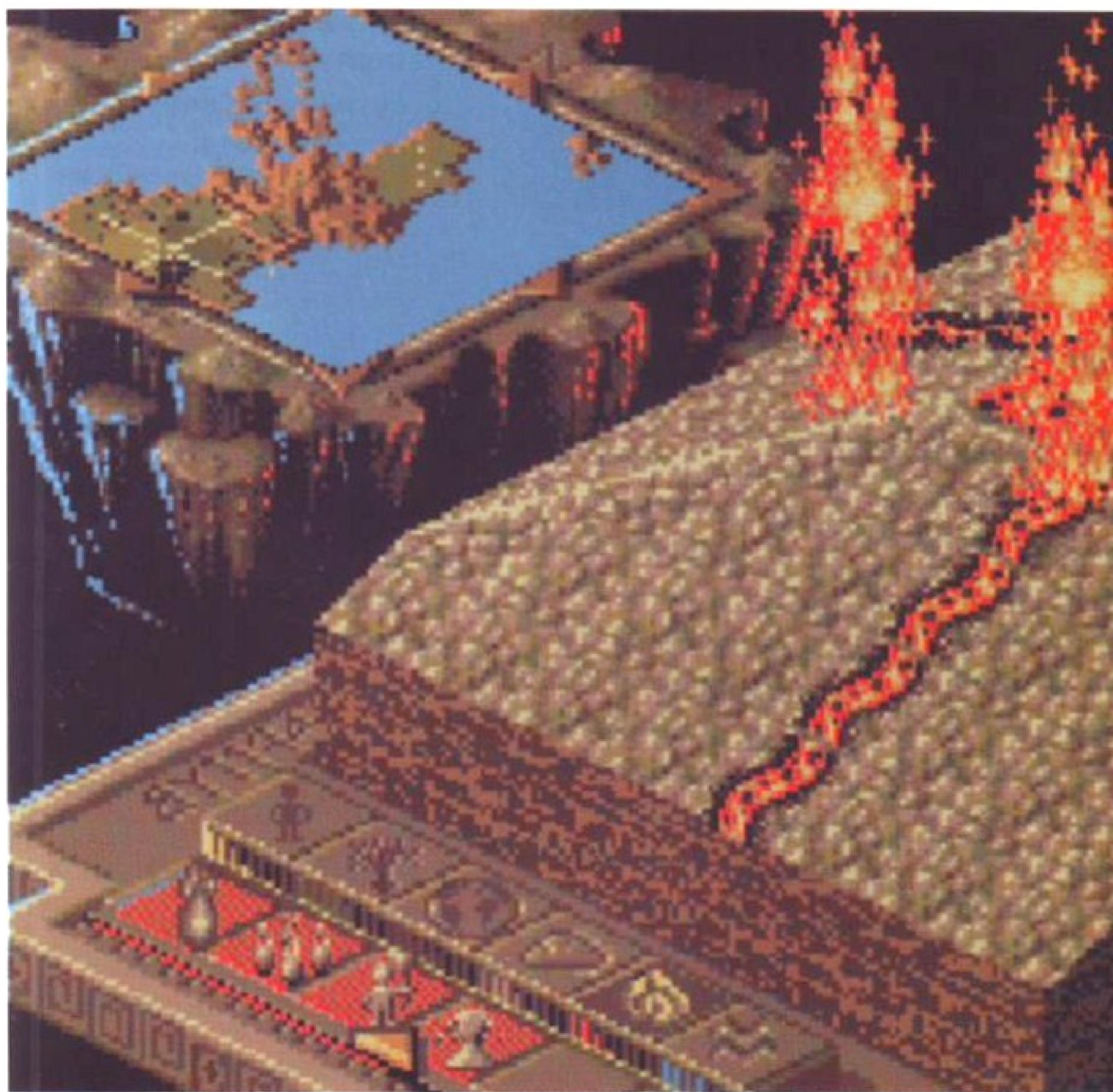
Populous II has arrived and it's everything you'd dreamt it might be - and more.

More earthquakes, more volcanoes, more tidal waves,



Available late December for Amiga and ST.
£29.99





more deadly swamps, in fact the most devasting natural disasters known to man, and a few he hasn't heard of yet.

This time you find yourself back in Ancient Greece, where as one of the sons of Zeus himself, your aim is to achieve immortality and take your place next to him on Mount Olympus.

But the old boy isn't going to let you have your way without an almighty fight and he's conscripted 32 of his most powerful deities to stand in the way of your ambitions.

Design your own elaborate settlements with grand houses, roads and trees. Construct city walls in preparation against the oncoming rains of fire, whirlwinds, bolts of lightning and new, especially devious monsters like the foxy Helen of Troy, who leads people to their death with her beauty.



Populous II has 1000 worlds to conquer, 1MB of graphics, 5,000 animations, dozens of new sound effects and a mind-blowing sound track.

To celebrate it's release, you can also collect special Populous II T-shirts, mugs, data disks and interactive clue books from The World of Populous II which you will find in participating retailers.





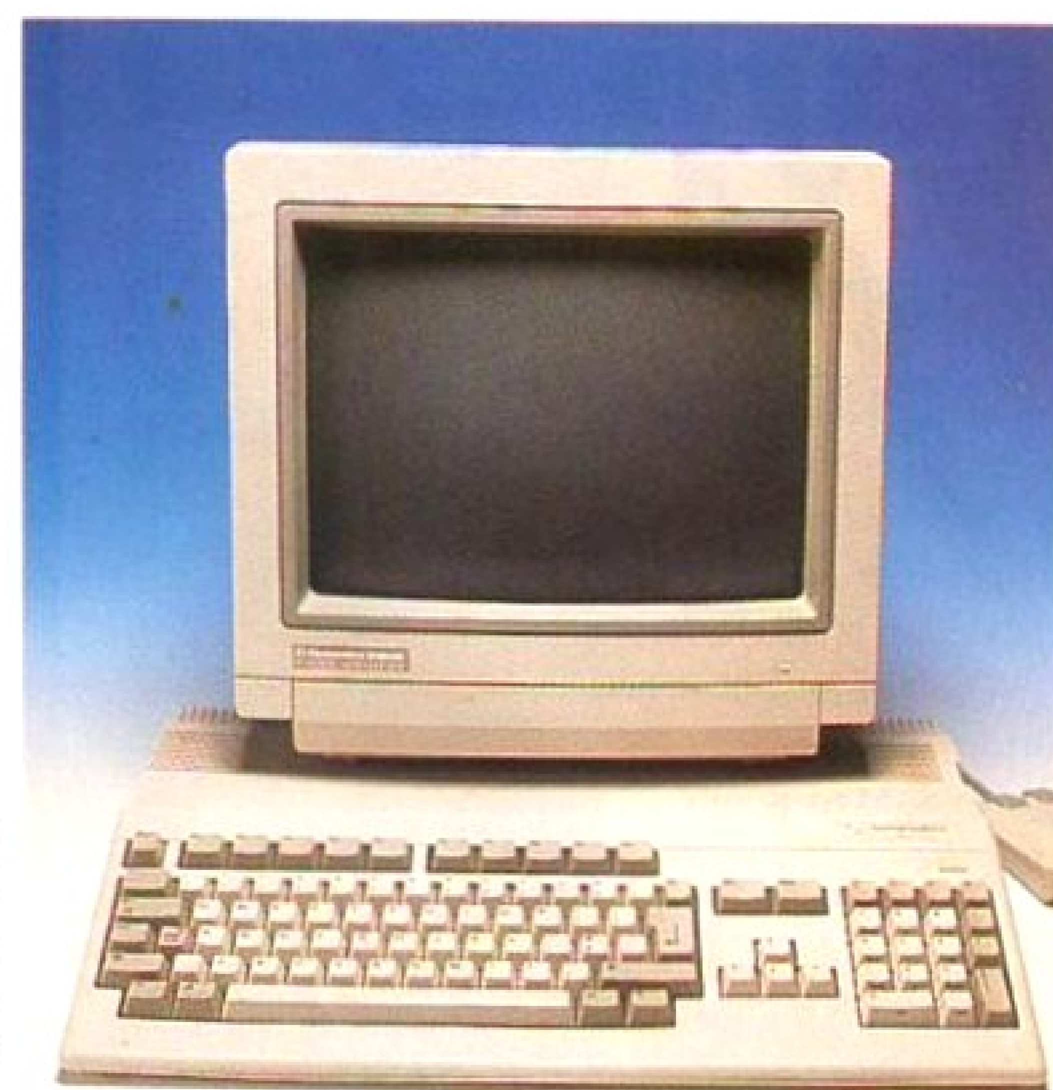






A500 Plus brings Workbench 2 and ECS at no extra cost, but software compatibility problems crop up

New Amiga surprises everyone including Commodore



The A500 Plus wasn't expected to reach dealers' shelves until after Christmas, but it has unexpectedly arrived causing concern over software and hardware compatibility.

In the first week of October, dealers opened new batches of Cartoon Classics packs and found a surprise. Instead of the standard A500 with the A501 RAM expansion that they were expecting, there was a new Amiga inside: the A500 Plus, featuring 1Mb of RAM on the main circuit board, the new Enhanced Chip Set and Workbench 2 (full details can be found on Pages 32-33).

Why had the new machine appeared with no announcement from Commodore? At first, Commodore claimed that "only two or three thousand" A500 Pluses had gone into circulation, but it soon emerged that this was not the case. It became evident that the Plus was intended to be launched after Christmas and huge demand for A500 packs had led Commodore UK to take shipment of whatever Amiga 500s they could get their hands on.

The situation is still somewhat confused by the fact that older models are still appearing through the distribution chain, but it does appear that the Plus will be the standard entry-level machine eventually, with some overlap in the short term. "I can't guarantee that they will all be Pluses," comments Commodore's National Retail Sales Manager Kelly Sumner, "when you have products being flown, coming by road, coming by sea, you just can't say".

Rather than delight, the arrival of the Plus is causing immediate consternation among the dealers. While they find it easy enough to explain to customers why there is no RAM expansion included, they have greater problems when new owners start complaining that some software doesn't work.

Clearly and inevitably there are compatibility problems with software running on the new system. The dealers, who are testing their own software stocks, are claiming failure rates as high as only 5 games in 50 working, implying a failure rate of 90 per cent: while Commodore, who have been testing as much software as they can get their hands on since May this year, insist that of over 800 titles they had tested only 10 would not run, suggesting a failure rate of only 1-2 per cent.

The truth of the matter seems to lie somewhere between the two extremes. The figure of 5 in 50, for instance, turns out to be a set of compilations that were tested: compilations often involve strange disk formats and protection systems and so are very exposed to compatibility trouble. Older games, carried in large quantities by many mail order dealers, are less likely to work, though a game as old as Xenon 2 (on the Coverdisk of Issue 3 of *Amiga Format*) will run fine, probably because it dispenses with the operating system immediately.

All new games releases will have to work with the new system and a check round of all the top UK software houses performed by Commodore reveals that everything on their current catalogues is fine. All 'serious' software that runs legally from Workbench is very unlikely to have problems, developers on this side of the market at least having accounted for A3000 users when programming. It's older games, budget stuff and Public Domain software that are likely to run into most problems, with software houses unlikely to invest in rewriting old stock.

Incompatibility problems are possibly aggravated by the fact that Workbench 2 will now be appearing in the Amiga 1500 and 2000 too. Soon all software will certainly be compatible with the new system, but until the dust settles, anyone buying software for a Workbench 2 Amiga should check with the supplier before purchasing rather than have to take software back. A list of all titles checked by Commodore and further details of the compatibility questions appears on Pages 239-243.

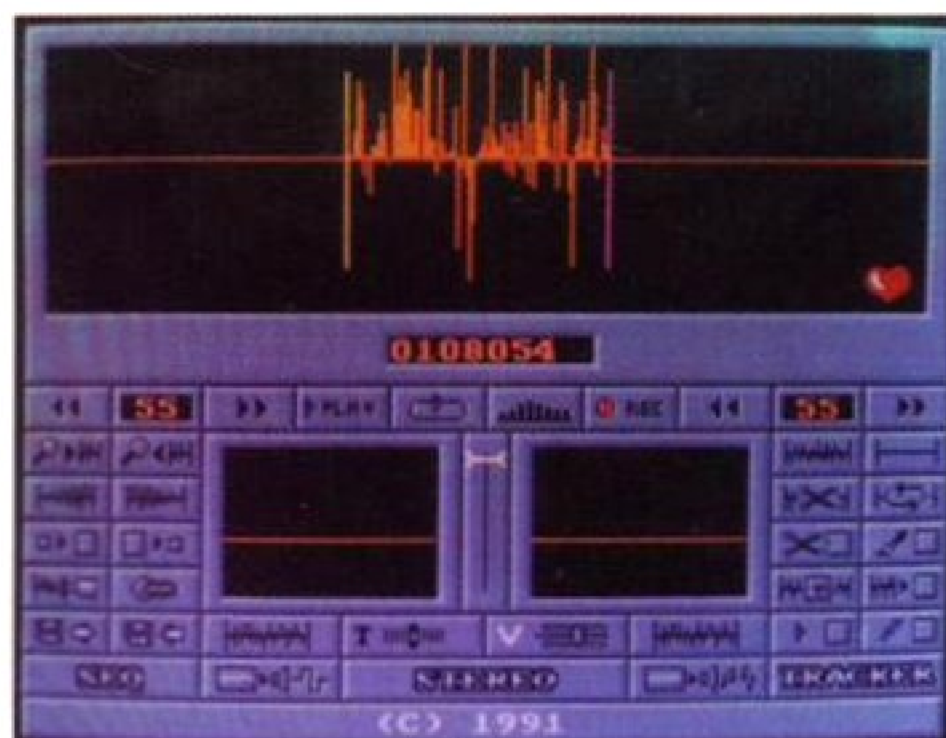
Attack of the samplers

Sound sampling fans can luxuriate in the release of masses of new sampling packages. While *Audition 4* (reviewed on Page 181) takes on *AudioMaster 4* (expected soon from Oxxi-Aegis) for the position of best software, three new complete packages join the GVP DSS system.

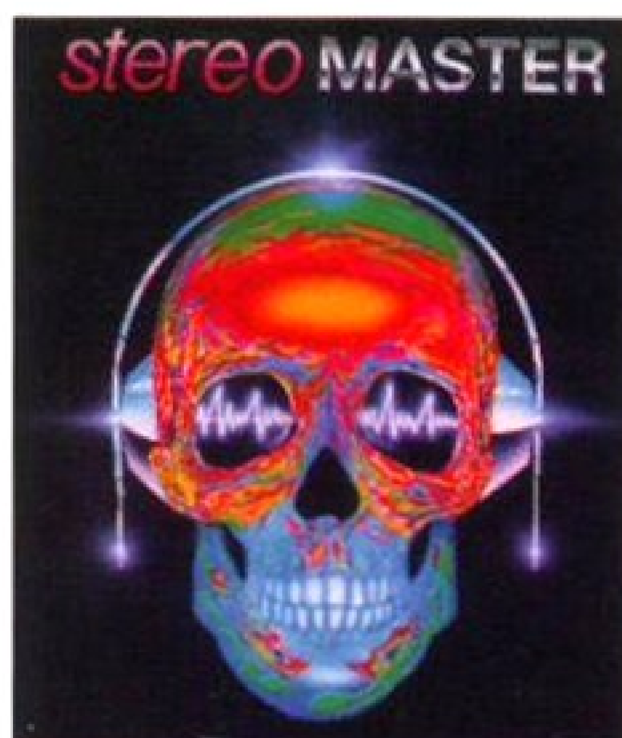
Microdeal not only update their AMAS MIDI-compatible sampler but also, first up, release Stereo Master to replace MasterSound. Features of Stereo Master are too numerous to list here but you will be able to try it for yourself on the Coverdisk of the January issue.

PanDAAL, best known for their excellent hand scanner, are surprise entrants into the sampler scene. Their MEGAsound package will cost £49.95 but is available at a special introductory price of £10 off, and it features everything you would expect from a modern mono or stereo sampler including sample editing, a tracker and a sequencer program.

Microdeal 0726 68020
PanDAAL 0234 855666

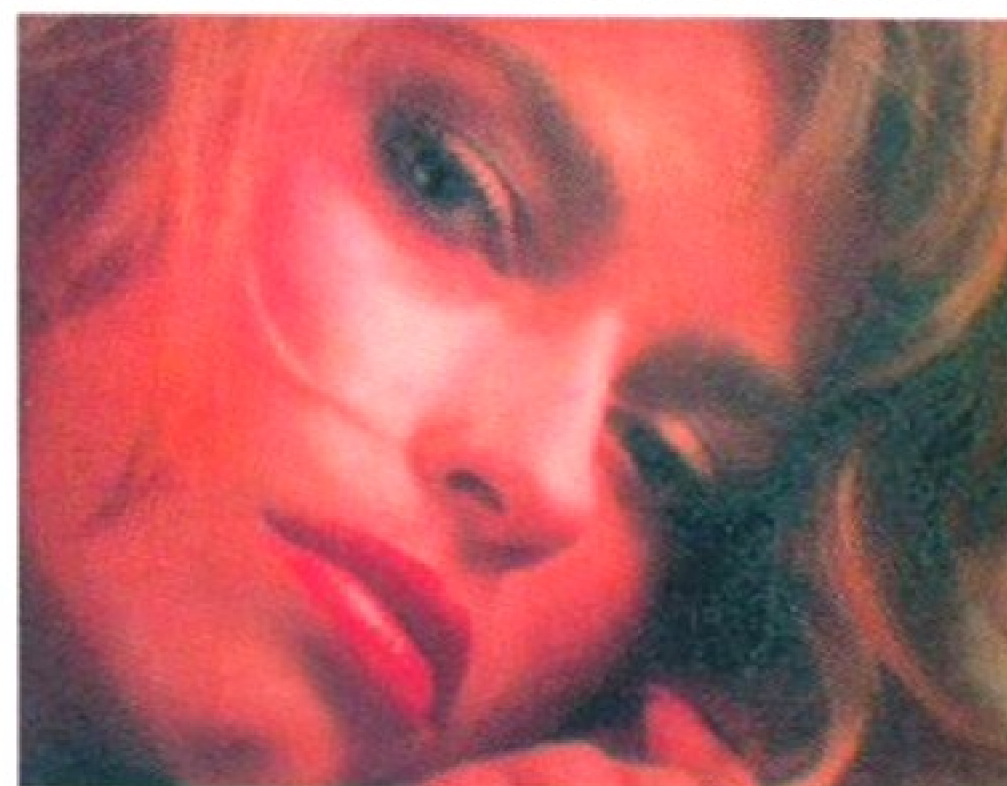


***MEGAsound* from PanDAAL is a surprise new arrival onto the sampler scene**



***Stereo Master*, the replacement for *MasterSound*, will probably blow your skull, and is featured on next month's Coverdisk.**

More colours for less



A cut in the price of the the Harlequin, the first 24-bit 16-million colour card to appear on the UK market, has been announced by Amiga Centre Scotland. The base level 1500 now costs £1095 plus VAT with the 2000, 3000 and 4000 models costing £100 more each step. There is also an upgrade to version 1.4 of the Harlequin-compatible 24-bit paint program *TV Paint*, featuring larger than screen-size painting, improved colour ranges, brush wrapping, anti-aliasing and special facilities for the Harlequin's Alpha channel. The TV Paint version clocks in at £800 plus VAT, with a VD2001 version costing £480.

Amiga Centre Scotland ☎ 031-557 4242

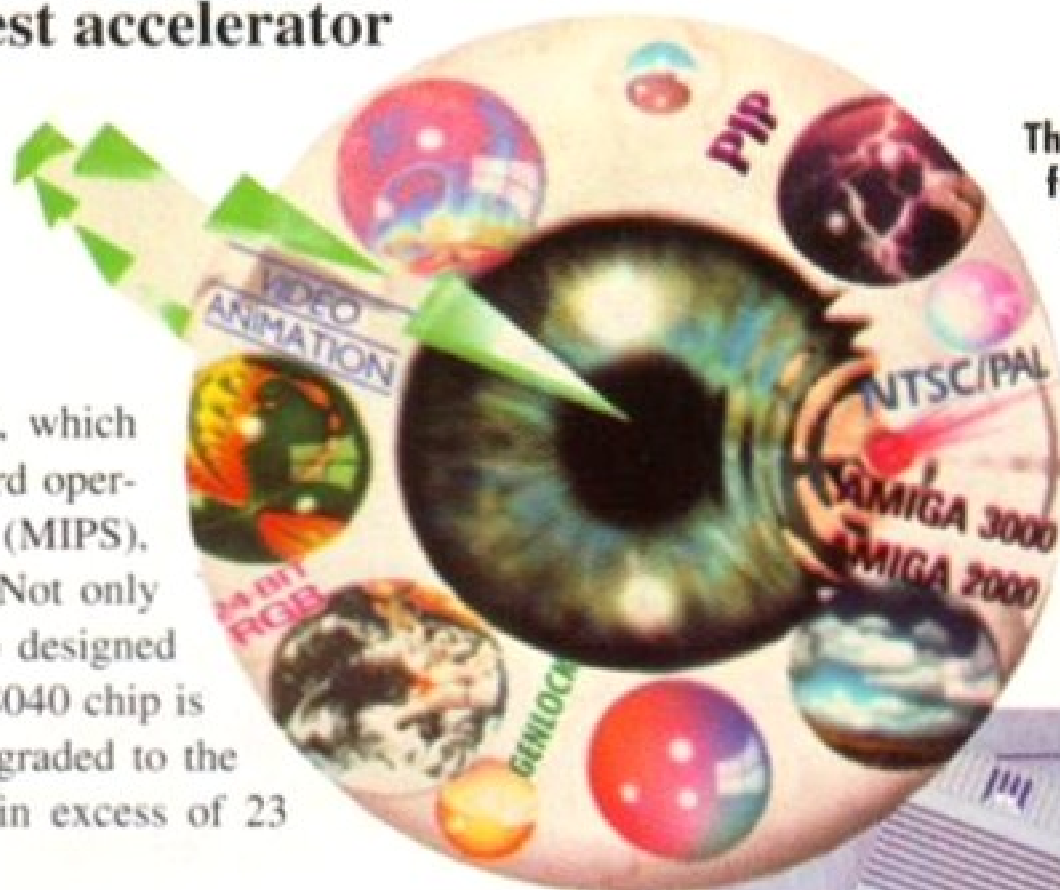
GVP go bigger, faster better

Exclusive news of the 'world's' fastest accelerator

American hardware supremos GVP stormed the World of Commodore show with no less than three new announcements, including the Impact Vision 24-bit framebuffer card and a new accelerator card that is claimed to be the fastest in the world.

The G-Force is a 68040 accelerator for the A3000, which already has a speedy 68030 chip on board. The new card operates at 28MHz giving 22 million instructions per second (MIPS), bringing 3000 owners 'true workstation performance'. Not only can it be fitted with up to 8Mb of RAM, but it is also designed asynchronously so that when the latest version of the 68040 chip is released by Motorola the board can immediately be upgraded to the new 33MHz version, giving frankly ludicrous speeds in excess of 23 MIPS. A UK price is not yet available.

The IV24 is an internal card for the 1500, 2000 or 3000 which combines a 24-bit framebuffer with RGB and Composite genlock facilities, a real-time frame grabber that saves HAM or 24-bit images, a built-in flicker fixer and a picture-in-picture display for incoming live video signals. It's a heck of a hardware combo, but it's backed up by a software package combining "the Commodore-approved video titling package" SCALA, an exclusive version of 3D-modelling program *Caligari* and the new 24-bit paint program *MegaPaint*. "In one card, GVP have included everything a professional video user could ask for," observes Andy Leaning for Silica, GVP's UK distributors. And all for only £1,799.



The IV24 is a 24-bit card with an amazing variety of hardware functions as well as some excellent software included in the package. With all this to use in PAL, who cares whether NewTek produce a European Video Toaster?

The third brand-new product in the GVP range is the so-called 'black magic box', the Digital Sound Studio sound sampler. A look at the hardware explains the moniker: it's a compact piece that plugs into the parallel port and features stereo inputs and LED excess level indicators. The software includes a sample editor and a composition program. It's a competitive market right now, but at £89.95 this is an inexpensive option.

GVP are also cutting the prices on some of their hard drives and increasing the warranty across the range to two years, while UK distributors Silica are committed to providing full support for the new warranty.

Silica 081-309 1111



The G-Force 68040 for the A3000 is claimed to be the world's fastest card.

Going Bananas

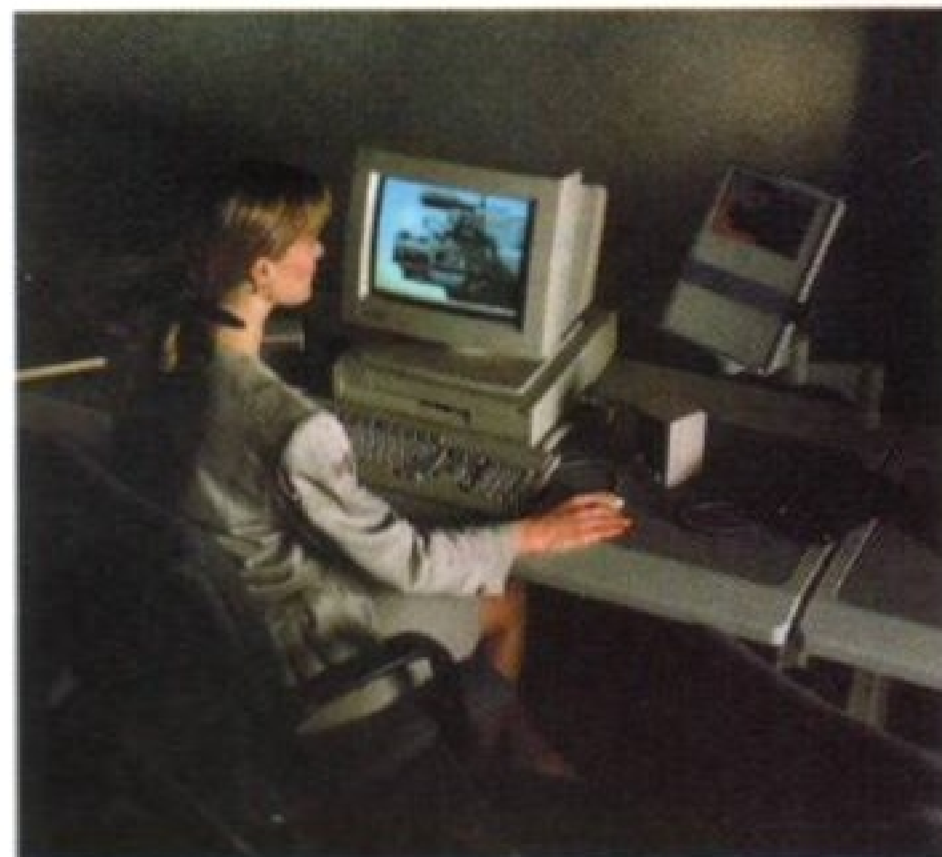


A game converted from the Archimedes to the Amiga! Whatever next? The 32-bit machine is best known for sitting in the window of Dixons looking expensive, but it was the lead format for a shatteringly good recent release called *Top Banana*.

An Archie to Amiga conversion is news in itself, but *Top Banana* demands attention. Firstly it sports exceptionally weird HAM screens. To compound this the theme is a green one, a fact which the recycled box shouts at the top of its voice.

Most intriguing, though, is that the launch of the game will coincide with the release of a single of *Top Banana's* in-game sounds. Entitled Global Chaos, the 12-inch features Main Sprite KT on vocals with the Automatic Music Expert System generating 'complex musical patterns based on the rules of chaos and catastrophe'. Fractal music systems have been tried before with little success, but publishers Hex are so chuffed with their system that there are plans to release the music software in a commercial form early in 1992. *Global Chaos* by KT and *HEX* (produced by Cold Cut) is available on the Ninja Tunes label. ☎ Hex 071 701 5384

Amiga 2000 and 3000 go video



The Amiga 3000: now a serious contender in the video market with a new software bundle.

New packs for the Amiga 2000 and 3000 add value with free bundled software and a strong video angle. The Amiga 2000 Personal Video Producer (PVP) pack incorporates a 40Mb hard drive and A2300 internally-fitted genlock card along with top titling/presentation software SCALA and *Deluxe Paint III* for an all-in price of £1,299. "Slick and professional videos with high-quality text displays and special effects are now within everyone's grasp," boast Commodore.

The Amiga 3000 now comes with not only the AmigaVision multimedia presentation tool as standard, but also SCALA and, for the first time, *Deluxe Paint IV*, at the list price of £2,999. "This latest package makes multimedia available at a realistic price for any creative or business user," says Commodore's newly-appointed Director of the Multimedia Division, Barry Thurston.

Commodore ☎ 0628 770088

Mail order suppliers rush to ensure compatibility

The problems of software not working on the A500 Plus and other Workbench 2 equipped Amigas is especially acute for mail-order dealers, who try to add value to the Amigas they sell by supplying extra games which are frequently back-catalogue stuff. Gordon Harwoods are currently checking software and even employing a programmer to modify some titles, while Diamond have already announced an A500 plus Cartoon Classics pack with software checked for compatibility by trade distributors Leisuresoft.

The Diamond pack adds *Speedball 2, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, Cadaver, Xenon 2, Back to the Future 3, St Dragon, Car-V-Up, Corporation, Shadow of the Beast 2* and *Line of Fire* to the normal Cartoon Classics. Other titles included in their various different combinations include *Monty Python, Judge Dredd, Awesome, Brat* and *Frenetic*. So that's 15 titles you now know work on an A500 Plus…

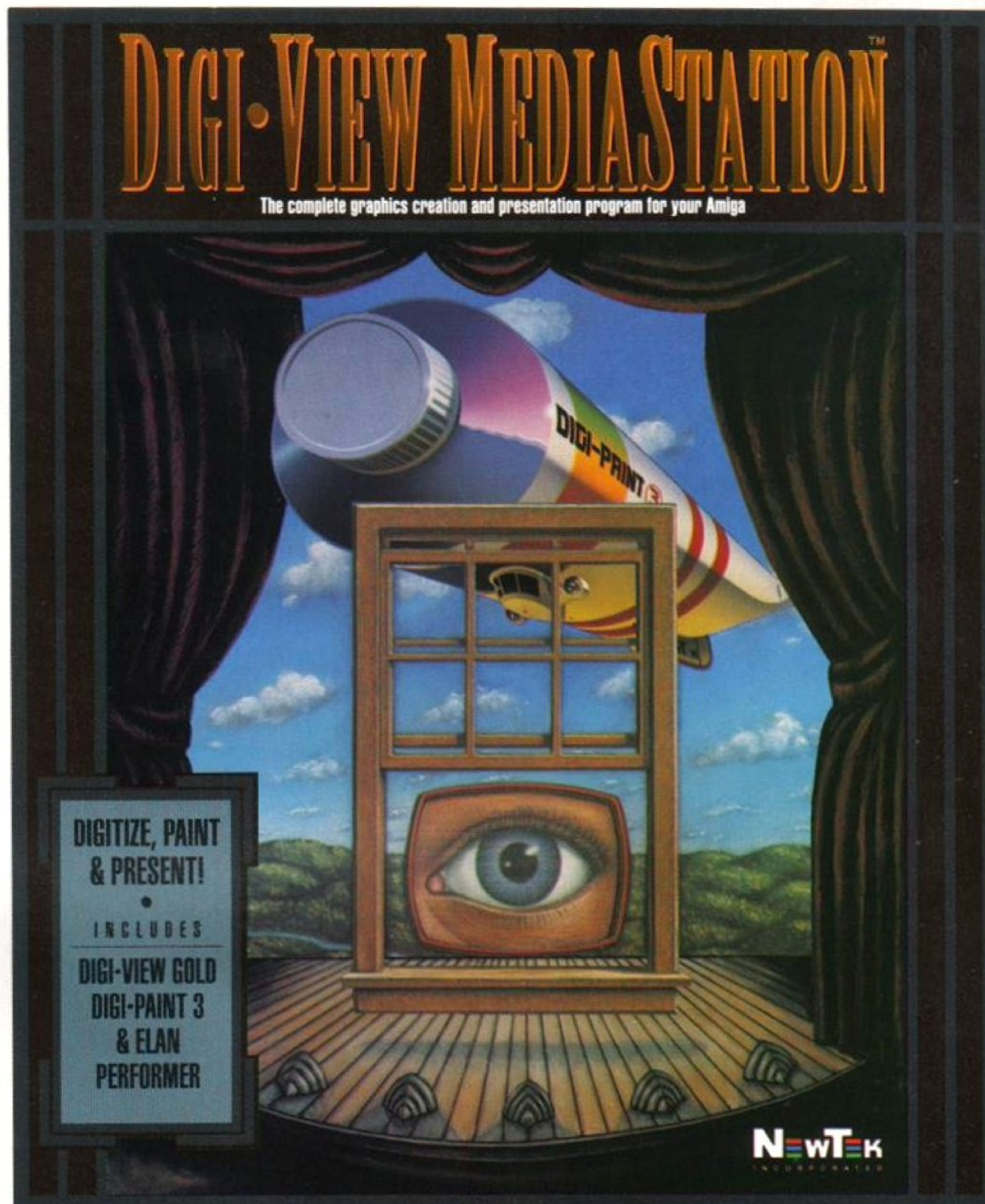
San Fran-Cisco Heats

A frenzied bout of wheel twisting, horn blasting and car ramming took over recently at the normally tranquil Amiga Format HQ. Top games players from Britain's best-selling computer mags battled to win a Cisco Heat arcade machine which Image Works were offering as a competition prize. Maff Evans represented Amiga Format and came a laudable fourth, winning a karting day prize for a compo which you can enter next issue. The winner was the controversial Stuart Campbell of our sister magazine Amiga Power: he may be opinionated but he's a heck of a player!

Kickstart switcher could save your bacon

When Workbench 1.2 was updated to version 1.3 many Amiga owners avoided software compatibility problems by fitting a board holding both Kickstart chips, with the ability to switch between them.

NEW FROM NEWTEK!



Digi-View MediaStation gives you the three tools you need to use your Amiga to its fullest

DIGITIZE - Bring the world into your Amiga with Digi-View, the best-selling, most award-winning Amiga peripheral of all time. Amiga World Magazine says "the best value in Amiga digitizers and delivers the best images". Just point your camera and in seconds Digi-View will capture images with brilliant colour and stunning clarity. Whether you're creating graphics for video, desktop publishing, presentations, or just for fun, Digi-View is simply the best.

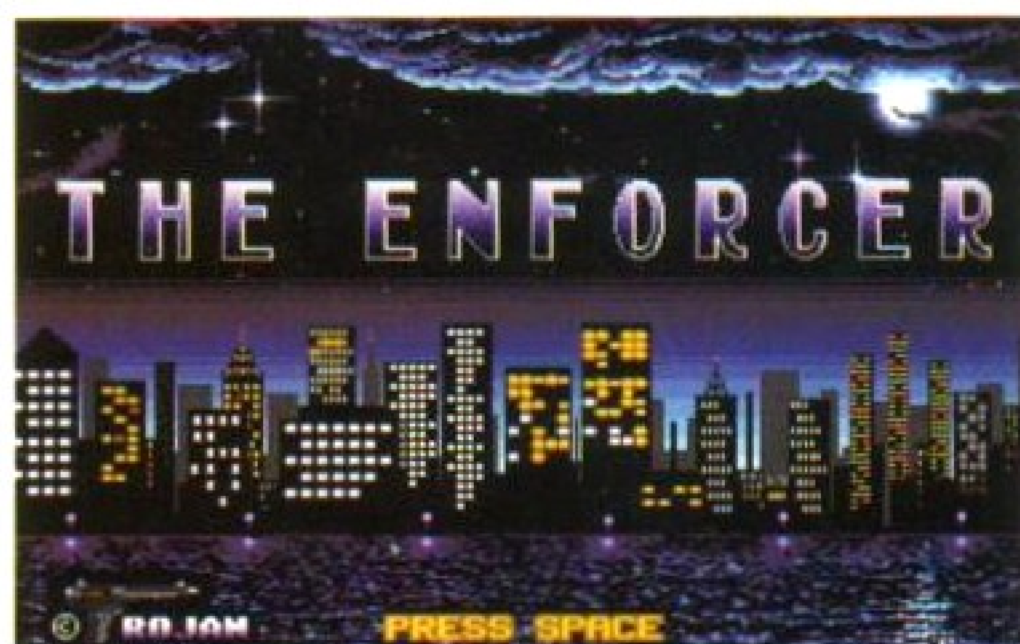
PAINT - NewTek pioneered the 4096 colour HAM mode back in 1985, and since then no other program has come close to matching its amazing power. This all-new version, Digi-Paint 3, is the fastest, cleanest, most powerful HAM paint program ever created. As Amiga World Magazine says, "If you are really serious about owning only one paint program, we would have to recommend Digi-Paint 3".

PRESENT - Elan Performer 2.0 makes slideshows and interactive presentations a snap, just click the mouse to assign pictures or animations to your keyboard. Performer will automatically sequence the images with precise timing, or you can tap a key to bring your images up instantly with this high-performance presentation tool. AmigaWorld Magazine calls Elan Performer "the finest display tool to date for the Amiga artist."

NEWTEK
INCORPORATED

Soon to be available at your local Amiga dealer or call NewTek at 612-881-2862.

Light Guns get big





The Phazer light gun has received a double boost. Manufacturers Trojan have released two more of their own games – the *Enforcer* and *Firestar* – while top software house Ocean has confirmed that their conversion of the stand-up coin-op blast *Space Gun* will support it.

Major software publisher support is essential if the system is to flourish. "We want to ensure that when people pay out for one of our light-guns that they will be able to get maximum use from it," Trojan explain. Public support for light-gun hardware has seen Trojan's sales across all formats exceed a million in two years, but software support is the key to success and to this end Trojan have made the software driver for the gun available to all software publishers. They are also considering an AMOS-compatible version for the Public Domain. *Space Gun* is the first major game to utilise the driver and it could be the big break the Phazer has been waiting for.
Trojan 0554 753 378

Computer Shopper or Computer Eater?

Proof of the fact that the Amiga is now dominating the home computer market is the predicted dominance of Amiga stuff at the Computer Shopper Show: but the proof of the pudding is in the eating. The Show is a multi-format affair that takes place just before Christmas every year, with over half the visitors believed to be Amiga owners.

Alongside such well-known names in the Amiga software and hardware world as PanDAAL, Precision, Rombo and HiSoft, you will also be able to meet up with a mad Frenchman who goes under the name of Mange Tout and is in the Guinness Book of Records for eating anything that comes his way. He'll be eating a computer. The Show runs from December 5th to 8th at the Wembley Exhibition Centre.
Blenheim Database 081 868 4466

Entering the Music Zone

Seemingly thriving music distributors Zone have announced a whole heap of new releases resulting both from their close tie-up with US music software specialists Dr T's and from elsewhere. Dr T's, whose professional-level sequencer KCS has made an enormous impact in its latest version (see Page 178 for the review) have a new multiple-machine patch editor called X-Or. From Blue Ribbon Bakery, known for their Bars and pipes sequencer, there's a first on the Amiga in the form of a triple MIDI-out interface as well as SuperJam!, a wide-ranging composition tool intended for use alongside other programs.

Zone also have an enormous range of famous songs by famous musicians set up as MIDI files in the Trycho Tunes library. And with Christmas coming up, they've become the first to actually sell the long-awaited Funlab package from Kawai, a combination of an Amiga with colour-coordinated synth keyboard and amplifier speakers and a whole suite of software.
Zone Distribution 081 766 6564

Fancy a Jarre?

Fans of the much-imitated synthesiser musician Jean Michel Jarre can now get their hands on one of the best fanzines there is. If PD music demos are anything to go by, he's a popular man with Amiga owners and the Conductor of the Masses magazine covers topics of interest to all fans.
Conductor of the Masses 0933 55273

Gold Disk pile on the upgrades



Pagesetter III will see Gold Disls's entry level DTP package offering exceptional value for money.

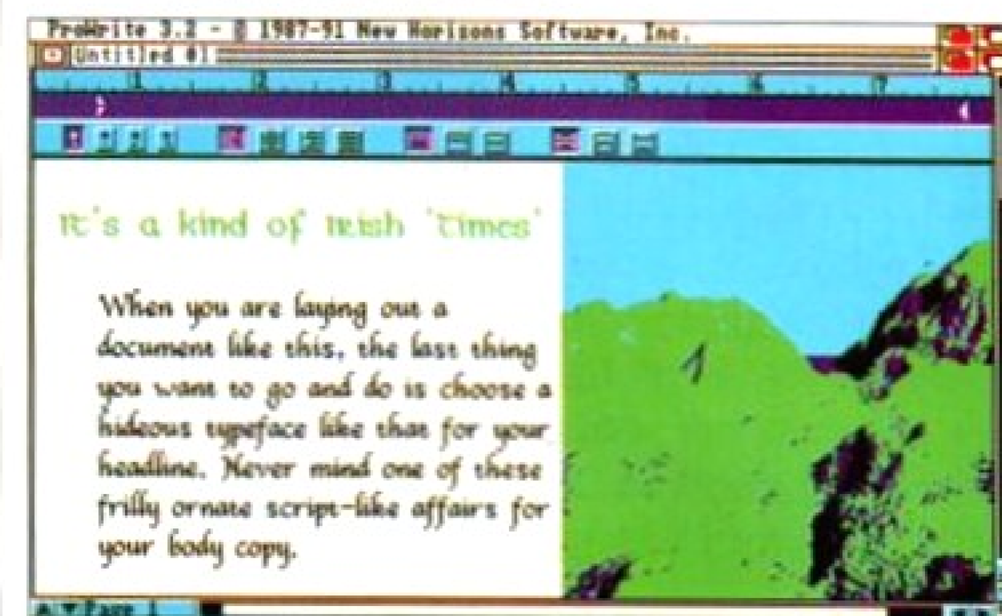
Just received as we were going to press is news of a whole host of new updates from classy North American productivity software creators Gold Disk. Top of the tree is *Professional Page* version 2.1, available as a free upgrade to owners of 2.0 and featuring massive speed increases as well as the latest Compugraphic scaleable fonts. Most exciting for entry-level users is the new *Pagesetter 3*, the basic DTP package now incorporating a separate word processor and bitmap paint program as well as a number of clip-art samples. At the price of around £100, it's most definitely a bargain.

There's also a high-end spreadsheet called Professional Calc on the starting block, along with further clear evidence of Gold Disk's commitment to the multimedia and video areas of the Amiga. The entry-level multimedia sequencer MediaShow is based around the Showmaker idea (see the review in Issue 28) and will come in at under £100. Meanwhile, the VideoDirector is a complete editing system for home video, automatically controlling your video recorder to compose a finished 'cut'.
HBM 0753 686000 and Silica 081 309 1111

Want some Chip RAM?

As the A500 Plus brings the importance of Chip memory to the fore, a new way of adding this memory to the A500 has conveniently arrived. The Meg-A-Chip board installs under the Agnus chip and provides up to 2Mb total of Chipmem as well as carrying slots for up to 4Mb of Fast RAM. It will cost around £270 for a board with 2Mb of Chip memory fitted and is sold in combination with a Virgo trap-door memory expansion.
Aquarian Public Domain 0703 685006

New horizons for graphic word processor



Top-end word processor *ProWrite* from New Horizons (see our feature on word processors with graphics, starting on Page 41) has just received another upgrade, to version 3.2. Key changes include automatic Saves, improved graphics handling and full PostScript print support. Expect an update review very soon.
Silica 081-309 1111

Simple music with a wider choice

Madchester music software producers Gajits have introduced a new range of sample disks intended to supply the needs of anyone who has a sequencer capable of using samples to create Amiga-based music but lacks the raw materials. Each disk from The Sample Series is aimed at a different family of instruments, ranging from Percussion and Effects to Piano and Keyboards, all samples are in standard IFF form, and the low asking price includes a ready-made song on each disk showing what can be done with the samples. Meanwhile The Hit Kit, initially given away free with Gajit's entry-level Sequencer One, is updated and expanded. The program makes it easy for beginners to prepare songs in a number of different musical styles.
Gajits 061-236 2515

Font heaven

!"#$%&'()*+,-./0123456789:;
<=>?@ABCDEFGHIJKLM
NOPQRSTUVWXYZ[\]'ab
cdefghijklmnopqrstuvwx
yz{}



If you're the sort of person who's always tiring of the standard typefaces, there's now an excellent way to get more. Fontgrabber from Genisoft allows you to design your own typefaces and save them as proper Amiga fonts. It's a simple little utility for use in conjunction with a paint program, but it's also very effective.
GeniSoft 0753 680363

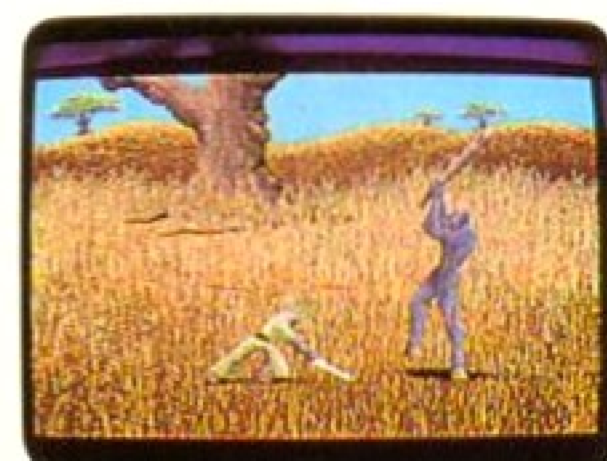
MOONSTONE

A HARD DAYS KNIGHT









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Oh, by the way, if the sight of so much blood upsets you, don't worry. The blood is an option!

Moonstone features nearly 1,000 frames of incredible animation in 2 Megabytes of monsters and creatures, over 60 beautifully painted backdrops and detailed scenery. Sound effects are high quality digital samples and includes a full musical score and stunning full screen animated introductory and game complete sequences.



MINDSCAPE

12

Moonstone contains scenes of strong graphic imagery with particular realism. Although these scenes are optional, this product is voluntarily rated 12. Parental Guidance is recommended for younger players, however this is not a legal requirement.

For your local dealer, contact: Mindscape International Ltd, The Coach House, Hooklands Estate, Scaynes Hill, West Sussex RH17 7NG. Tel: 0444 831 761

Christmassy colours

NEXT MONTH! NEXT MONTH! NEXT MONTH!
NEXT MONTH! NEXT MONTH! NEXT MONTH!

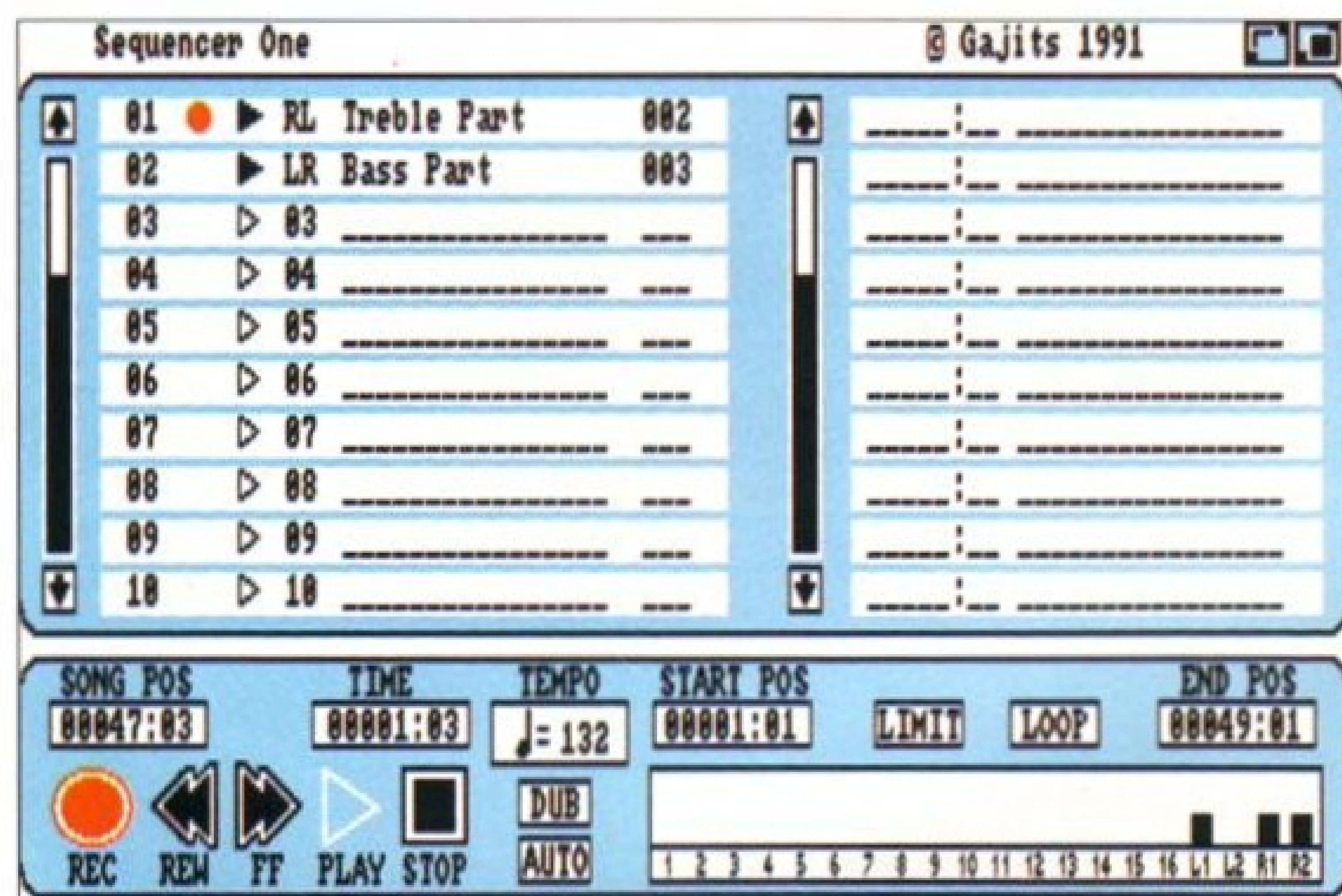
The most exciting magazine package ever for Amiga owners...

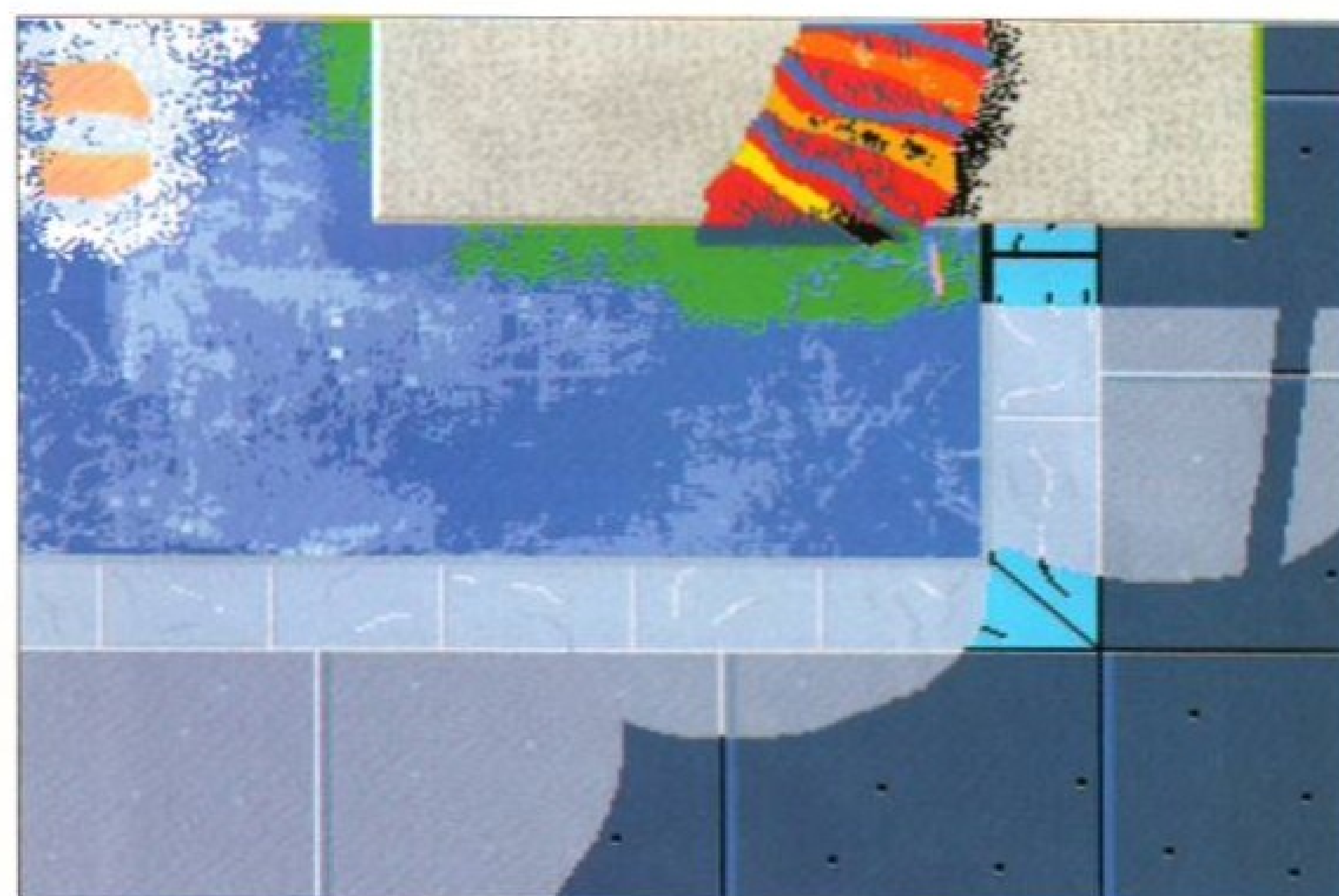
This has to be the most stunning Amiga magazine-and-disk combination ever to be seen on the newagents' shelves!

SOUND & VISION

Two disks, containing over £150 worth 'Sound and Vision' software: complete top-name graphics and music programs. We're not talking 'fully useable demos' : we're not talking cheapie or PD stuff. These are top-class full-price commercial programs, both of which are less than six months old.

Free 32-page Sound and Vision magazine not only tells you how to use and get the most out of the Sound and Vision software, but also explores everything you ever wanted to know about painting, animation and music-making on your Amiga.





SOUND: Sequencer One from Gajits is all yours. It's an excellent way of making whole tunes on your Amiga, comes with an example tune to show you how it's done, and a load of sound samples are provided making it all you need to produce beautiful music. And it usually retails for a full £99.

"All you'll need at first and none of the frills a beginner won't use... one of the most straightforward sequencers we've seen."
80% Amiga Format Issue 24.

VISION: Graphics Workshop from Holosoft is yours too. This 64-colour paint and animation program has been described as 'a Deluxe Paint 3 beater', with several advantages over its rival. It's notoriously easy to use and has everything you could expect. And its usual retail price is $105.

"Most animation packages fall down on ease of use: not Graphics Workshop... there are many advantages over Deluxe Paint."
90% Format Gold Amiga Format Issue 25

PLUS CHRISTMAS SPECIAL ISSUE!

A bumper special edition to keep you absorbed over the Christmas season. 300 pages packed with ideas, opinions and information on what's happened on the Amiga scene over the last year. Find out what we think will be the Christmas Number One game: discover our views on the best and worst of 1991: and heaps, heaps more…

HAVE YOU JUST SEEN THE LIGHT?

For anyone who's new to the Amiga, the Christmas special issue will be full of explanations and descriptions to help you become an instant expert. Don't miss it!

DON'T RISK MISSING OUT ON YOUR COPY!

This is certainly the most exciting issue we've ever done and it's going to sell out very rapidly in the days before Christmas. Why not make sure you get a copy by reseving it with your newsagent?

Please reserve me a copy of Amiga Format Issue 30, January 1992, with the special Sound and Vision package.

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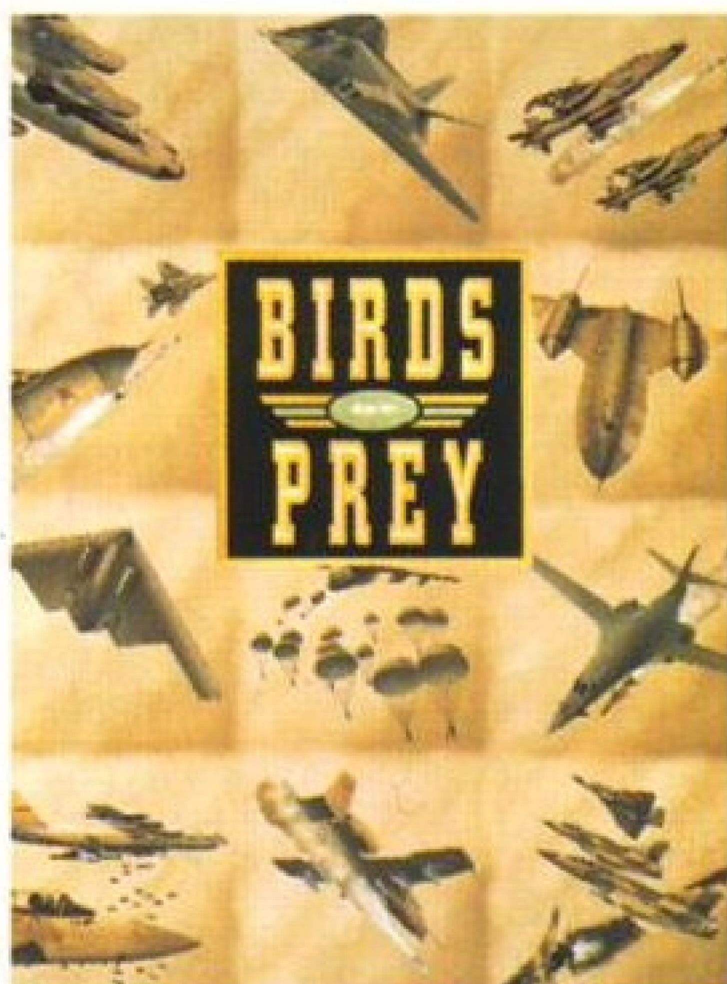
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AMIGA FORMAT ISSUE 30 WITH SOUND AND VISION ON SALE DECEMBER 12 £3.95

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£34.99

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Four years in the making, Argonaut Software have devised what Jez San describes as "the most realistic and dynamic world ever created".

Take off.

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ARGONAUT Software Ltd.







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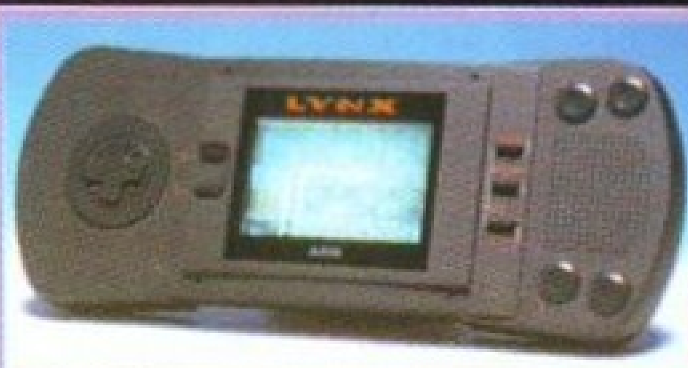
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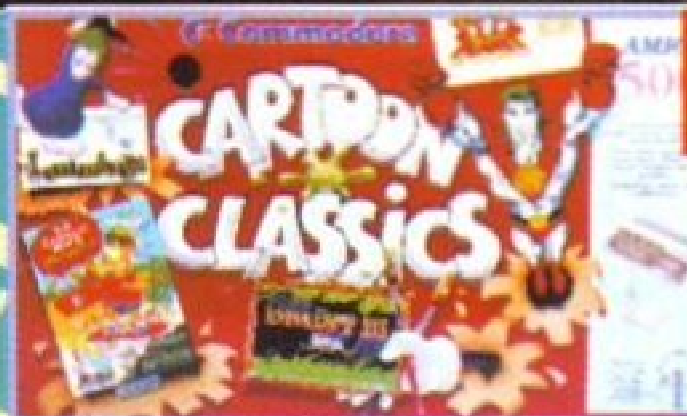
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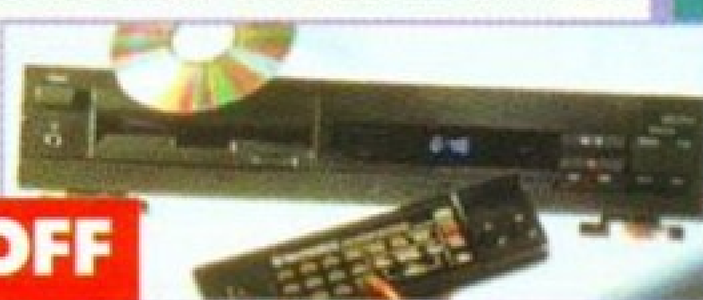




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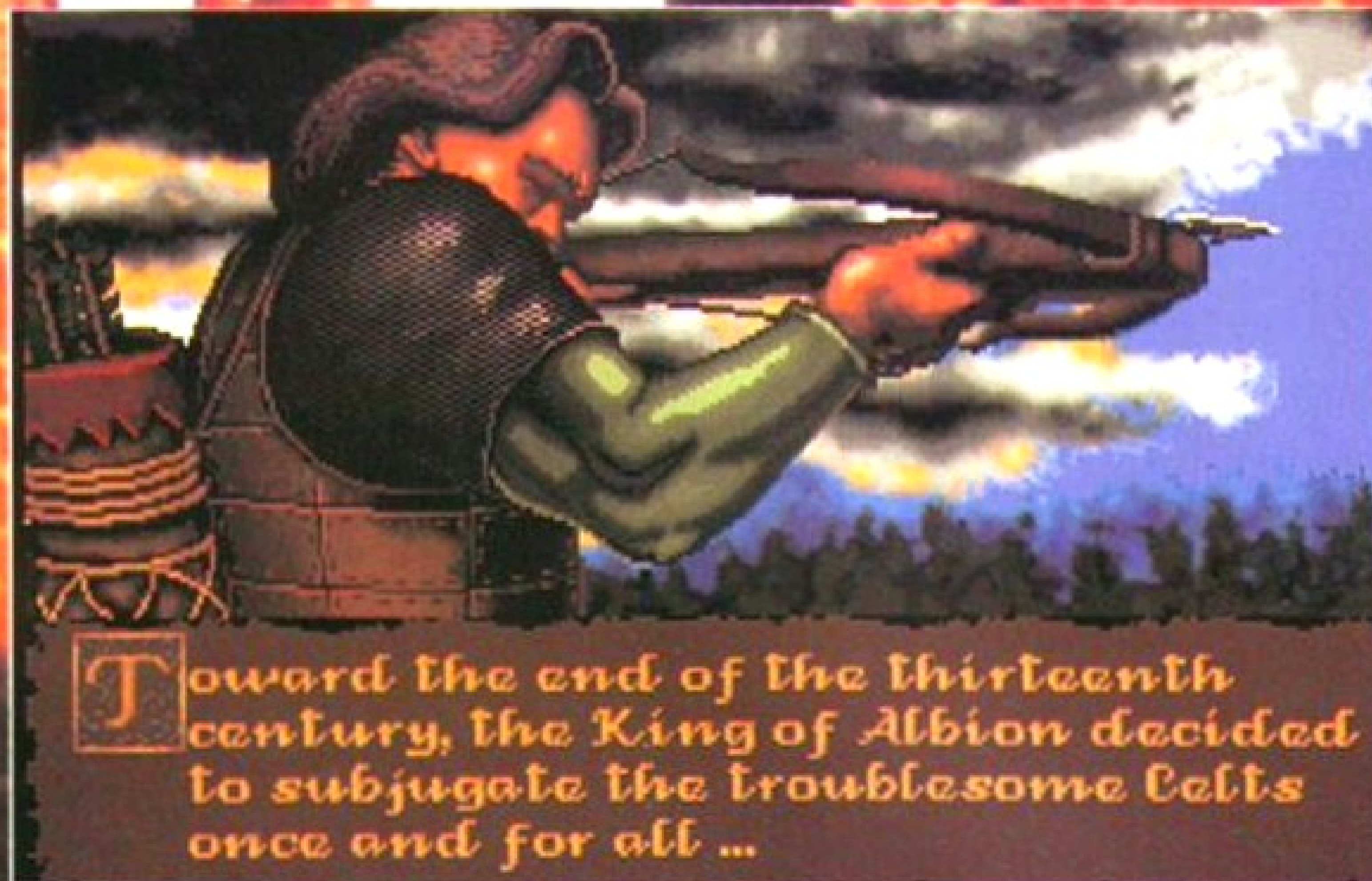
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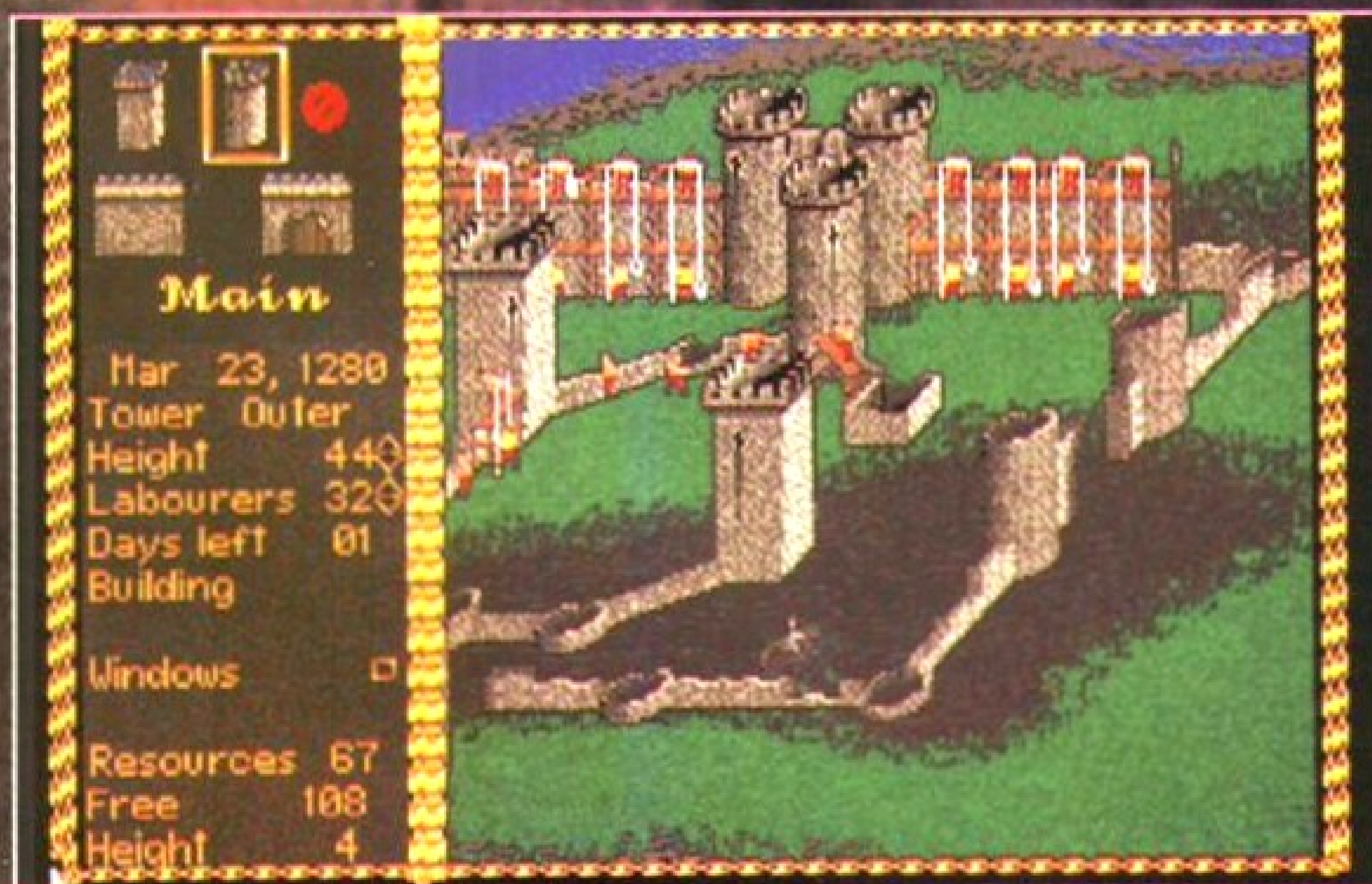
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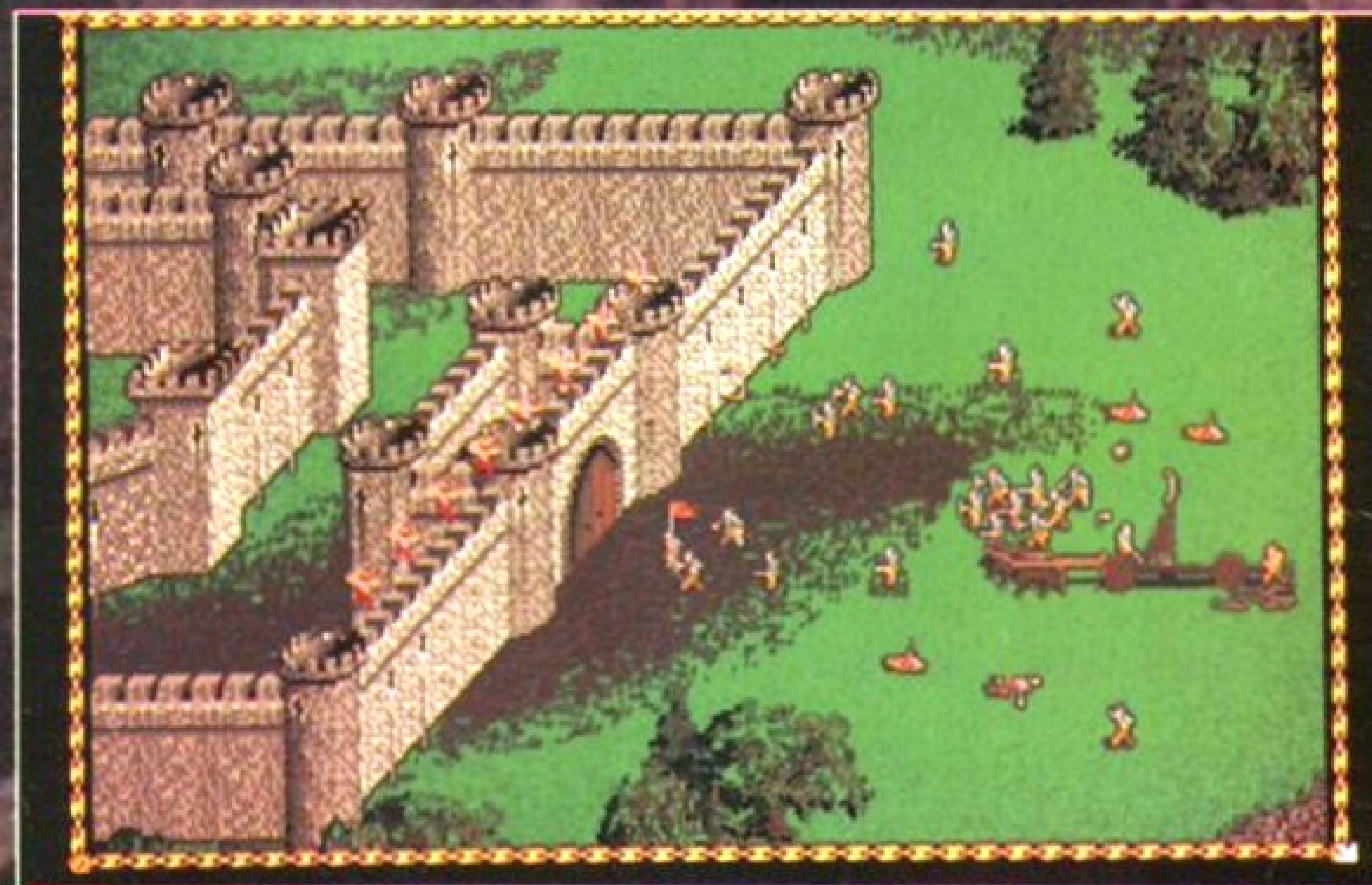
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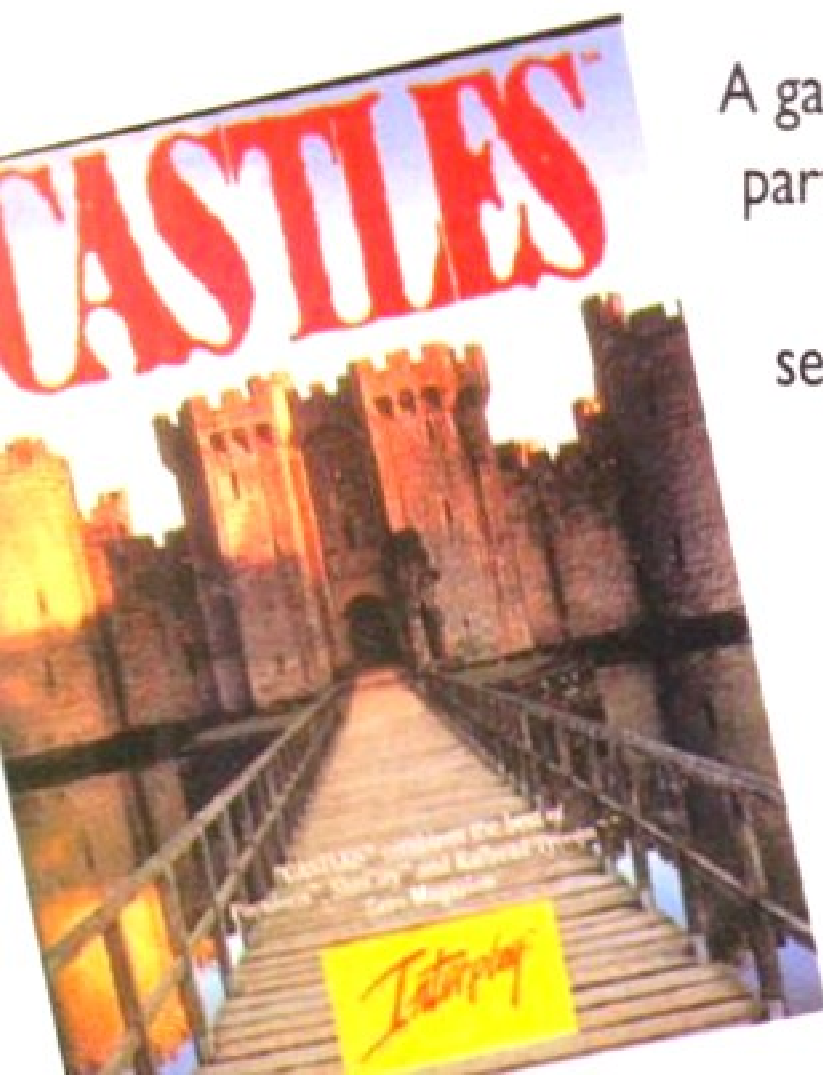
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Coverdisk

Don't be shy, just bang your Coverdisk into the faithful Amiga, and if you're having troubles with what to do next just read on...

GETTING STARTED



To play the Blues Brothers just type Y and Return, to look at the Home Accounts 2 demo hit H and Return. Easy.

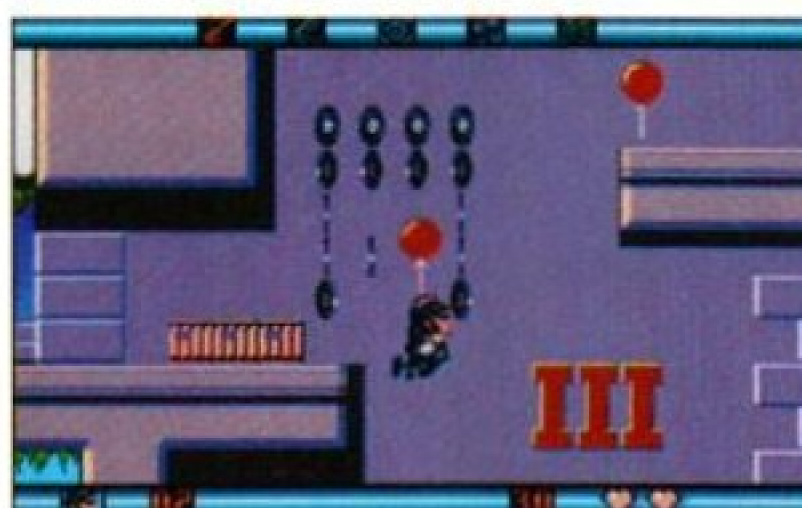
You start off as normal: turn on your Amiga and insert the disk. After a few seconds, the decision message will be printed. Only the *Blues Brothers* demo or the *Home Accounts 2* demo can be run directly from the disk.

It's very simple to get each program to work. Enter Y and then hit the Return key for the *Blues Brothers*, or N and the Return key for *Home Accounts 2*. Note that after playing the *Blues Brothers* once, the machine will 'hang'. The music will keep playing but you will have to reboot to play again.

You will need to use a copy of *Deluxe Paint* to use the *Real Things* Shark animbrush. Well, strictly speaking any paint program capable of using animbrushes will do – but *Deluxe Paint* is by far the most popular.

The Blues Brothers

Titus
PAL/NTSC



Control Jake in his frantic attempt to make it to the concert on time

The evergreen Jake and Elwood make their computer debut on the *AF* Coverdisk, so you can judge for yourself whether the game lives up to the standard set by the film.

Once you have selected the demo (by pressing Y and hitting Return) it will take about 30 seconds to load. Make sure you have your joystick plugged in and ready for action, because the level starts as soon as its loaded.

Further instructions can be found on P25, but here's a quick rundown. You have to bypass all the obstacles (police, shopping trollies and Ted's), pop into the music shop to pick up a guitar, and make it to the flag via some balloons. All against the clock.

Home Accounts 2

Digita International
PAL/NTSC 1MB



***Home Accounts 2* gives you a much easier way to calculate where all your money is going. Not a terribly exciting prospect perhaps, but it's easy to use.**

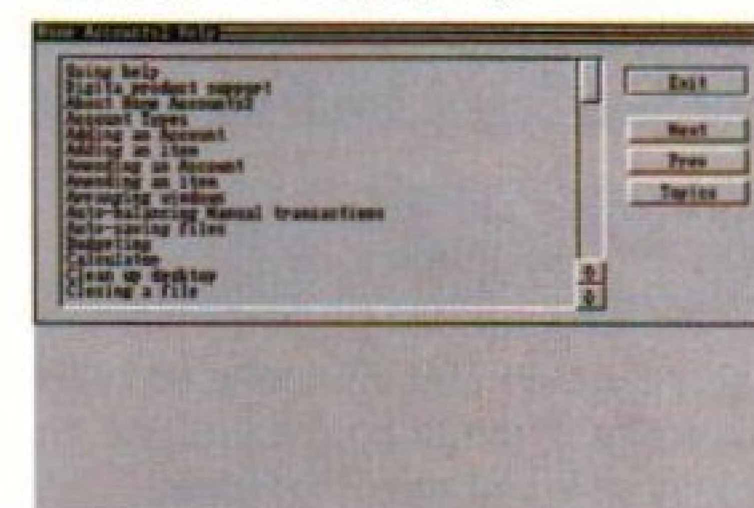
The Human Interface Protocol 'look and feel' first used in the *Wordworth* word processor program makes a return. It's used extensively in Digita's soon to be released financial program called *Home Accounts 2* (original or what).

Loading the program is not difficult, but there are a couple of tricky bits to get into the program proper. After it has loaded it will put up a time and date entry box. You have to enter a reasonable date (using the form date/month/year) or the program will not continue. Hit return, alter the time if necessary and click on OK with the mouse.

After that, it's time to load in the example data file. Choose Open File (by keeping the right mouse button pressed and moving the pointer top left, then down). Select Married.ha2 from the list of files which will appear, and then click on the icons, to see what they do.

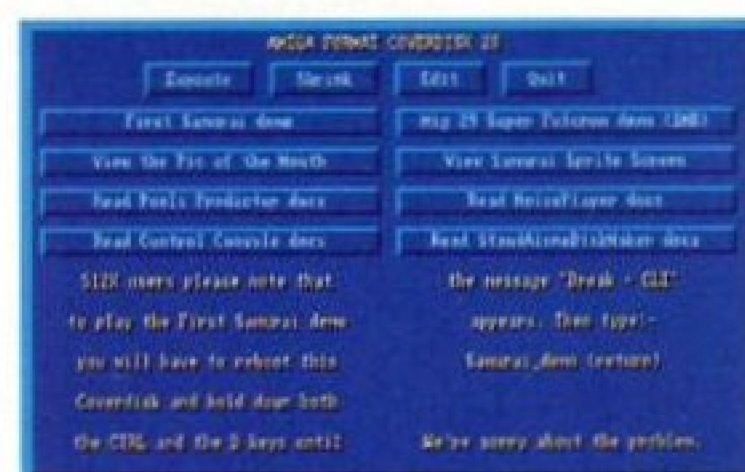
You can't actually edit information from within the demo - you can load and save, but not change things. Do bear this in mind before phoning us up!

There's a lot of things you can do with the demo – for further instructions you had better turn to Page 26. Remember, you need 1Mb or more of memory to use it properly!



The Help option on *HA2* is every bit as useful (if not more so) than the one on *Wordworth*. Select the subject and read the description - it's so easy to use!

From Last Month



Want to see a shark swimming across your screen? Use this animbrush!

Apologies to all the people who have been frustrated with getting the *Control Console* program to work (as used on the *AF*28 Coverdisk). There isn't a bug in the program, but Alex Kerr (the author) forgot to mention that the program needs an extra file from Workbench when you're setting up your own menus.

The file in question is Icon.library. It can be found in the Libs directory of any Workbench disk. To copy it onto your *Console* disk, boot up with Workbench and type this line from Shell (replacing mydisk: with the name of your disk. Don't forget the colon!):

```
Copy from Sys:Libs/Icon.library to Mydisk:Libs
```

Sorry for the confusion. Now you know why your disks didn't work!

Shark Animbrush

Real Things
PAL/NTSC



Want to see a shark swimming across your screen? Use this animbrush and you'll almost feel you're jaw-to-jaw with this beast!

Know what a leopard shark looks like? Well don't worry you soon will, as Real Things have released yet another compilation of moving clip art, called *Sea Life*. This animbrush comes directly from that compilation.

What is an animbrush? A standard brush is a section of picture, cut out with a paint program. An animbrush is a series of different brushes that can be stamped out in succession through an animation. Many presentation programs let you use animbrushes, because it is much simpler to move part of a screen around than to animate the whole screen.

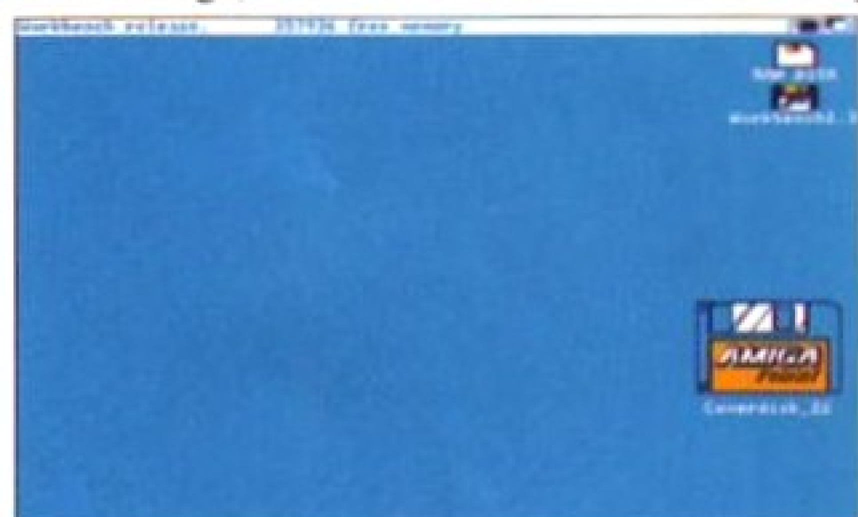
To use animbrushes, you need a paint program which can use them. *Deluxe Paint* is by far the most common, but many other programs support animbrushes. To load it, first load your paint program, select Load animbrush (on the anim/animbrush menu in *DPaint*) and click on the name 2.Real_Things_Shark.abr in the file requester. More details on Page 25.

Using Your Coverdisk

1. Always write-protect your disk. Move the tab so a hole is showing.
2. Copy the Coverdisk and use the copy, not the original. This may sound like a complicated task suitable only for techno buffs, but it's surprisingly simple to do, just follow the simple instructions for copying the disk which are given below.
3. Read the instructions when using the programs.

Backing up your Disk

First turn on your machine and load Workbench (one of the disks everyone gets with their Amiga). Once the Workbench screen appears and the drive light goes out, remove your Workbench disk and insert the Coverdisk. Once the drive light has gone out your screen should look like this screen.





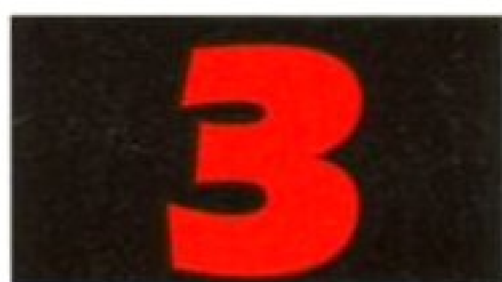
Next, move the mouse pointer to the Coverdisk icon and click once with the left mouse button – the icon will highlight. Press the right mouse button and keep it down. The words 'Workbench', 'Disk' and 'Special' will appear at the top left of the screen. Move the pointer to the word 'Workbench', and a menu will drop down. Select the 'Duplicate' option: you should have got this far.



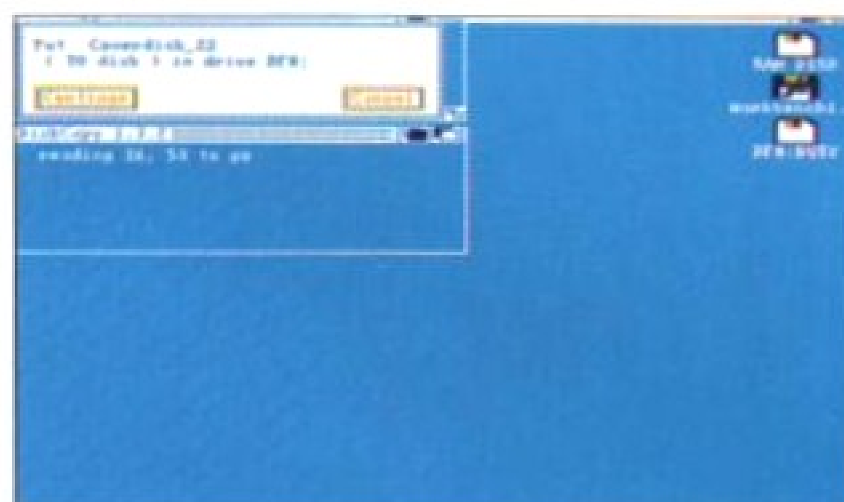


The computer will ask you to insert the Workbench disk again – it needs to read the command to copy disks. After you've done this, a boxed message (a requester box) will appear, asking you to insert the source disk. Insert the Coverdisk once again and click on the 'OK' option with the left mouse button.





After the computer has read part of the Coverdisk, it will once again display a requester box asking for the destination disk to be put into df0:. Put the disk that you want the Coverdisk copied to in the drive. This procedure of swapping disks will continue until all of the disk has been duplicated.





Eventually, you will end up with two Coverdisk icons, one has the name 'Copy of Coverdisk 22'. Click once on this with the left mouse button to highlight it. Bring down the 'Workbench' menu again (by holding down the right mouse button and moving the mouse pointer to the top left) but this time select 'Rename' from the menu. Let go of the right mouse button to select the Rename option.





The name of the disk will appear in an elongated box – you don't need to insert Workbench again because the Rename command is built into the machine. Press the 'Del' key (which is next to the 'Help' key) to remove the 'Copy of' part, and press the Return key to make the computer put the new name to copy.





Disk not working?

We duplicate over 160,000 disks every month. Out of all those, obviously a few will be faulty. If the disk or any of the programs will not load or run properly, there may be a problem. Don't panic!

First try using the *DiskDoctor* utility on your Workbench disk to rescue it before sending it off for a replacement. In-full details of *DiskDoctor* can be found in the user's manual that came with your machine.

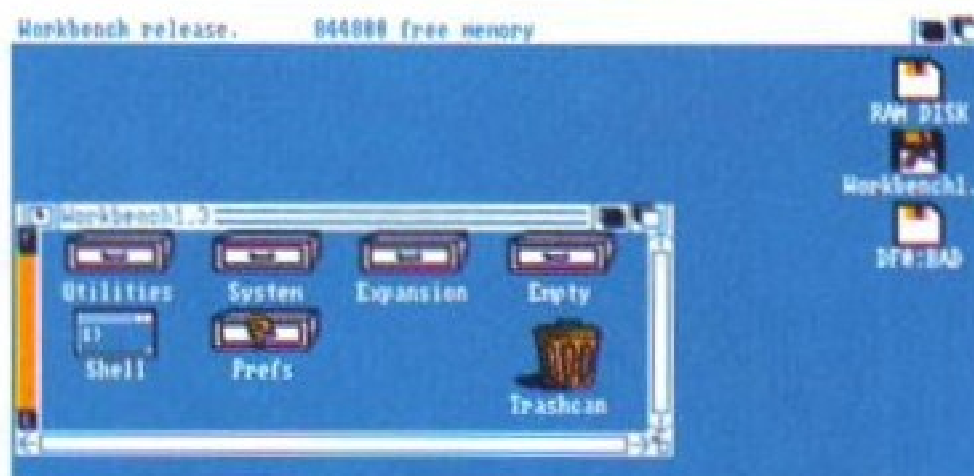
However, if your Coverdisk is faulty, you should send it back INCLUDING AN SAE for a free replacement within a month of the cover date to:

Amiga Format December Disk
Disk Copy Labs
Unit A, Westmarch
London Road
Daventry
Northants
NN11 4SA

Remember to include that stamped, addressed envelope!

The easy Way

There is another way to back up your disk, but because it involves using the typed-in instructions of the CLI or Shell, a lot of people are wary of it. Don't be! simply follow this step-by-step guide and you can't go wrong!



1 Load your Workbench disk. Open the disk, find the icon that says Shell or CLI and double-click on it.



2 When the Shell window appears and the drive light is out, type in:

```
Diskcopy from DF0: to DF0:
```

and press the Return key.



3. The Amiga will now ask you to insert the 'source' disk. It means the disk you want to copy, so put the Coverdisk in the drive and press the Return key.



4. Wait for a while and it will read all the information off the Coverdisk, telling you how far it has got. Then it will ask you to insert the "Destination" disk. Put the disk you want to copy your Coverdisk onto in the drive and press the Return key. Note that the disk does not need to be formatted already.



5. Put the source disk and destination disk in a couple more times when the Amiga asks for them. When it says "Diskcopy Finished" just type in:

```
endcli
```

to get out of the Shell or CLI. You may have to put the Workbench disk in again. Now your copy is ready!

DISK PROBLEMS?

If you have a problem with the disk – and you're sure the disk is in full working order – then you may need a little help. If you ring us on any Tuesday, and ask to speak to Pat McDonald, he will do his best to help you. Please understand, giving this sort of advice is time-consuming and we are very busy people, so only call if you really have to and do be considerate if we can't talk to you just then. If the problem is particularly complex it is better to send it to us in written detail. It will then be dealt with in the Workbench pages of the magazine.

BE CAREFUL!

We have done our best to check that the programs on the Amiga Format Coverdisk are simple to use and have no known viruses. We cannot usually answer complex telephone queries on the software (see the Disk Problems? box) and we do not accept liability for any consequences of using the numerous programs that are on the disk.

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Unless it is specifically stated, the programs on the Coverdisk are not in the public domain and the copyright remains with the author of the program.

Because some of the programs on the coverdisk are not PD, selling or distributing them without the author's specific permission is against the laws of copyright.

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Address ______________________

____

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Telephone *(Daytime)* ______________________

(Evenings) ______________________

My program name is ______________________

____

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- ☐ Game
- ☐ Business utility
- ☐ Music program
- ☐ Novelty
- ☐ Technical tool
- ☐ Art program
- ☐ Educational
- ☐ Other

Brief description ______________________

____

____

Checklist **(please tick):**

- ☐ **Stamped-addressed envelope for return**
- ☐ **README.DOC explanation file on disk**
- ☐ **Printout of README.DOC file (if possible)**
- ☐ **Name, address, machine type written on label**
- ☐ **Disk certified virus free**

IMPORTANT Please sign this declaration:

This program is submitted for publication by *Amiga Format*. It is wholly my own work and I agree to indemnify Future Publishing against any possible legal action should copyright problems arise.

Signed ______________________

Date ______________________

WE WANT YOUR PROGRAM!

If you've got any programs which you think other readers would find useful, interesting or amusing, we'd very much like to know about them.

1. Make sure your program is simple and fool-proof to use. Test it for all those bugs which you are sure you fixed: there are always more.

2. Create a file called README.DOC on the disk which explains exactly how to use your program. Try to make it humorous and informative – a good README.DOC gives a program a better chance of going in.

3. Fill in this form, sign it, and send it, with your disk (and a printout of the README.DOC file if possible), to: Coverdisk Software, Amiga Format, 30 Monmouth Street, BATH BA1 2AP. You could win a share of up to £1,000 in prize money.

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AEGIS

VISIONARY

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You've always felt you could design incredible adventure games, even better than some you bought. Aegis Visionary is much easier to use than standard programming languages.

This program was designed specifically for the creation of text, sound, and **animated graphic adventure games.** Visionary has a memory-efficient high-speed compiler and fully interactive debugger. With Aegis Visionary, you do not need to know the nitty-gritty details of how the system works. You can concentrate on the creative process of writing your adventure games. Aegis Visionary's language is designed to be as much like English as possible.

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65,000 ACTION blocks
128,000 variables

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25 IFF sound buffers
50 IFF on-screen graphic gadgets per screen
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10 articles (user declared)
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19 mathematical operations
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Speech output
Comprehensive user's manual

Aegis Visionary supports:
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Blues Brothers Playing Guide

Do you keep getting killed within the first ten seconds of the Coverdisk demo? Can't use the animbrush properly in DPaint? Read on!

SOME YEARS AGO, when some friends heard I hadn't seen the Blues Brothers film, they said I was "culturally deprived". Having seen it since I'm forced to agree. If you've never seen it, here's a briefish plot which may help you understand the game a little better.

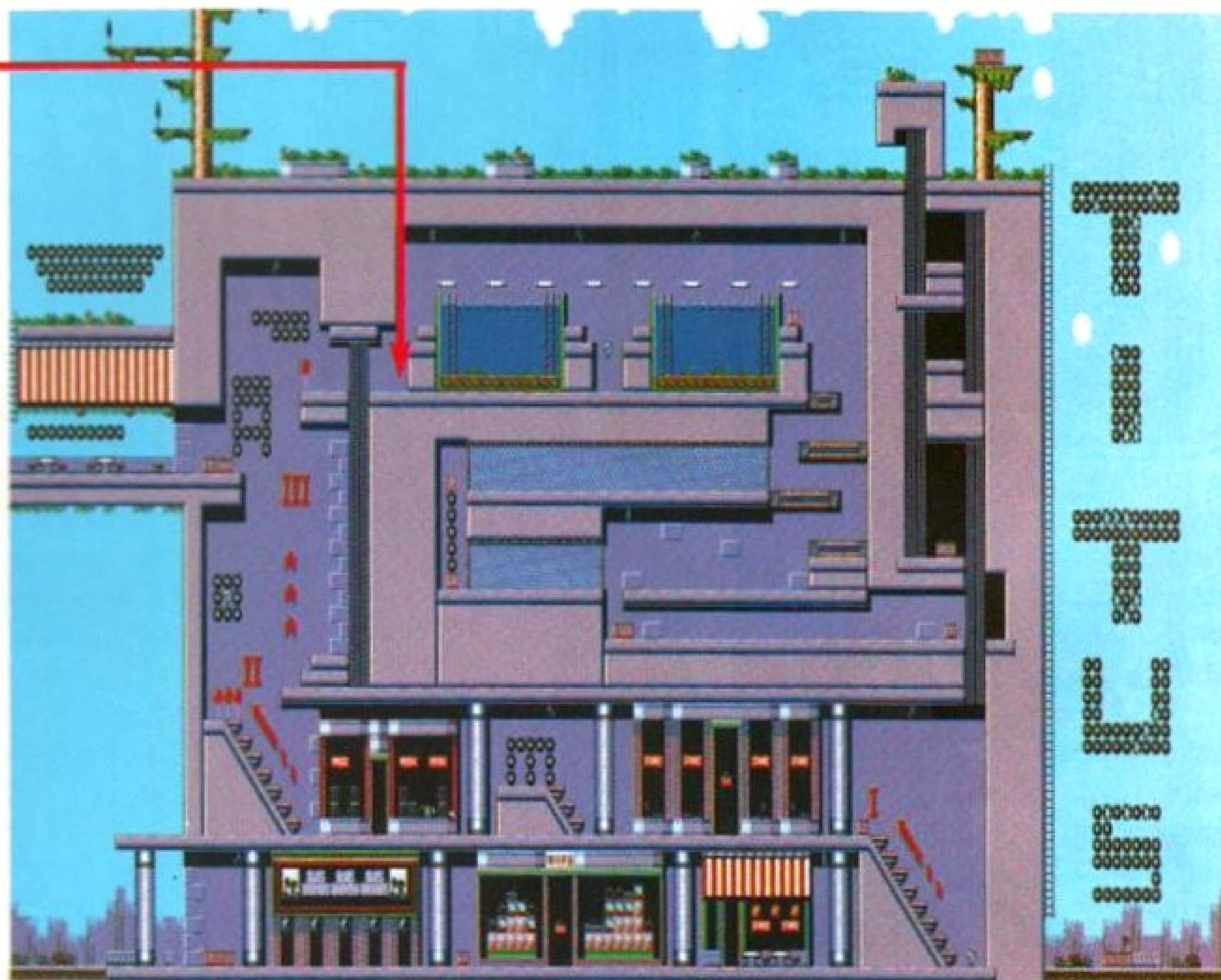
Jake and Elwood are two petty criminals and excellent musicians. They learn that the orphanage where they were brought up is about to be closed, unless they can raise the cash to pay the taxes owing on it.

Fired with enthusiasm and a certain mystical threat from an old nun, they decide to hold a charity performance to raise the money. Unfortunately a thousand and one obstacles are in their way, which they bypass using an immense amount of style and guts. The Blues Brothers really believe that they're on 'a mission from God'.

The demo

Once the demo has loaded it starts straight away. Jake has a limited amount of time to reach the end marker (a flag). Timing and a certain amount of thought is needed to get past all the different obstacles – you can use different methods to reach the same objective.

Control is by means of a joystick plugged into port 1 (the connector next to where the mouse plugs in). Left and right send Jake scurrying in the appropriate direction, down makes him crawl (he can still move while crawling – useful when he's being shot at) and up makes him jump. Learn to control him properly.



This is the flag which you need to get to in order to finish the demo. Notice how there's a lot more on this screen shot than you actually encounter in the demo - that's because the demo is half of the first level.

Along the way are stores that you can pop into, by pressing up and fire at the same time. Inside one of these is the guitar that you need to finish the game, while others contain records which you can collect for a bonus in the full game. It's best not to bother in the demo – the time limit is too tight.

Contact with any of the bad guys (policeman, their bullets, grannies in shopping trollies or Teddy boys) loses you a life but more importantly, time. The collision detection gives no margin for error whatsoever, so try to avoid everything that moves and then you can't go wrong. Can you?

Other things to avoid are the mystery tokens. These look like question marks, and in the finished game have random effects. In the demo they're always bad news.

You will almost certainly find that you need to reboot your Amiga again and again to complete the demo, as one mistake can take you over the time limit. Even when you do complete (and you'll get a round of applause from the computer) the computer will still 'hang', meaning that you have to reset it with Ctrl and the two keys either side of the space-bar. See 'The Inside Story' column for why, and you read the review on Page 88.

THE INSIDE STORY

The demo on the disk is not the same as the demo sent to us by Titus. Their demo took up three quarters of a disk, used some custom tracks (so you couldn't back it up, unlike the final disk you've got now) and you could choose to play either Jake or Elwood. When you finished the game, a slideshow appeared of the rest of the levels in the full game.

Unfortunately it was just too big, and Titus couldn't make it any smaller without the issue being late – unthinkable! So it had to be reduced in size very quickly, preferably using a standard Amiga disk.

What we did was use the Datel Action Replay II cartridge to freeze just the game part of the demo. When it finishes (due to the timer running out or being completed) the program is looking for further information on the disk that just isn't there. So it endlessly spins the disk, while the Peter Gunn theme plays on.

Sorry for the fact that you have to reboot between games – it was the only way we could bring you anything from the demo in the time allotted. At least now you know the reason why.

SHARK ANIMBRUSH



If you're shark looks like this when you've loaded it (the colours are wrong) it's a simple matter to adjust them. Select Picture/Change Colour/Use Brush Palette and the colours will be set properly

Here's a quick tutorial to help you use the Real Things animbrush for a *Deluxe Paint III* or *IV* animation. First things first load up *DPaint*. Then choose the Anim/Frames/Set # menu (hold down the right button, move the pointer to the Anim menu, down the menu to Control, then right to Set #).

Type in a value of five: you can use this on a 1Mb Amiga. If you have more memory for animation you can set a higher number for more frames of animation.

Next, load in the animbrush. Take out the *DPaint* disk and put in the Coverdisk (or just put the Coverdisk into a different floppy drive if you have more than one).

Simply select Anim/Animbrush/Load. Click on the disk (DF0: or DF1: probably) and then on 2.Real_Things_Shark.abr. Finally click on the load icon to start getting the information from the Coverdisk.

Position the shark in the middle of the screen, and click once with the left mouse button. This stamps the brush down. Notice that the next frame of the animbrush is ready to be stamped, but you don't want to put it on the same frame – press the 2 key to go to the next.

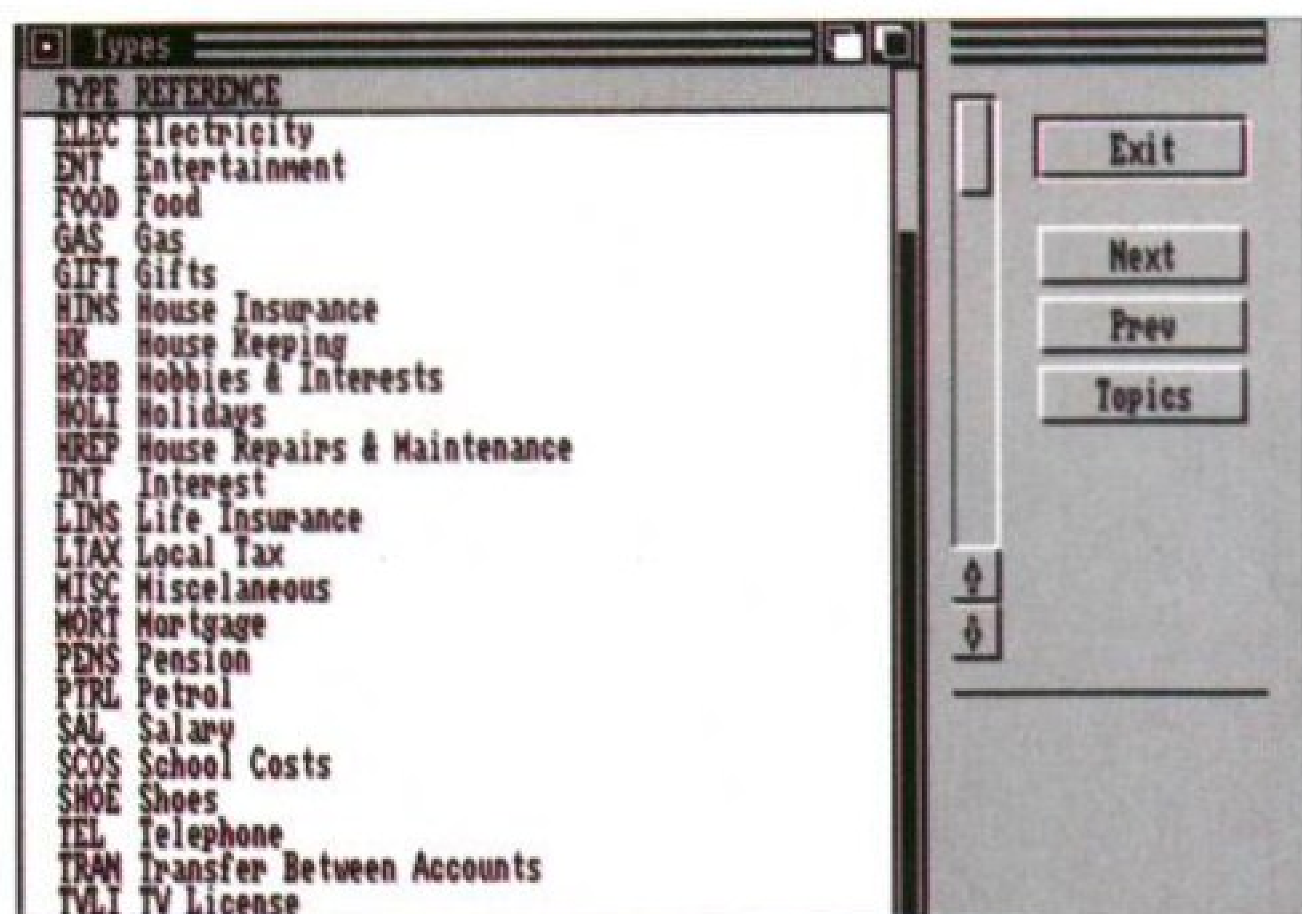
Keep doing this (clicking the button and pressing 2) until you loop around to the first frame. Then hit the 4 button to see the animation.

Not bad, eh? Of course, the next time you want a picture of a shark for something (for a logo, or wrapping onto a 3D object, or as part of a picture) you'll know where to find one or several.

Note that Real Things produce moving clip art for many different subjects - humans, animals, as well as the fish included on the disk. Look them up if you're interested in this sort of clip art.

Home Accounts 2

Where on earth does all your money go? Well here's the demo that can tell you. Follow this quick tutorial on Digita's latest little duckling...



Home Accounts 2 uses four letter codes extensively to deal with different subjects. Looking up which means what is a snap with the Types window

IN CASE YOU haven't read the introduction to *Home Accounts 2*, the first thing that you have to do after loading the program is to set the date and time. Date is entered in the form date/month/year, and the program will not accept strange values. Press Return to finish editing the date.

Once you're on Time (which should default to your battery backed up clock time, if you have one fitted) you can click on OK to enter the program proper. Clicking on OK while the date is being entered has no effect; the time indicator must be highlighted.

The best thing to do next is to load the example file and see how the system works. To do this, hold down the right mouse button and select Open File from the files menu (move the pointer top left and the menu will drop down. Let go when the Open File option is highlighted). After a couple of seconds, a file requester box will appear – double click with the left mouse button on the words married.ha2 (the name of the example file). It will then load.

How it works

The idea behind *HA2* is that you don't need to use the menus often. Once an area of your finances has been setup with an icon, just clicking on the icon will bring up the relevant information. You do need to use the menus though, to change or add new transactions to the system. So for browsing and keeping a check on your money, it's very easy.

I'll take apart the example, so you can appreciate the work needed to customise the full working program (this is only a demo, remember). A brief run through of the icons along the top. Printer is only going to do anything if you have one connected. The Help is for looking up a particular subject – a list of topics is displayed, and just by clicking on one with the left mouse button will bring up a description to help you understand the intricacies of the program.

Calculator brings up a nice on-screen calculator, which you can position as you see fit. Types is very useful – most things in the program use four characters to refer to different accounts or subject (PTRL for Petrol, for instance). Types brings up a list of all the shorthand and what they mean.

Regular is used for transactions that occur on a regular basis – mortgage payments, standing orders and the like. Budget is a sort of modeller – it's used to work out budgets for particular events, like holidays, moving house or just about anything else that needs a little financial planning. Investments isn't used very often – it stores information on on-going investments like stocks and shares.

Accounts

The next row of items has been setup to reflect different areas of money. The Barclays account (shown as a chequebook) is used for the bank account – probably the busiest area in any household.

The Leeds, Clare and Michael icons are used for savings accounts (hence the piggy-bank). Money doesn't come out of these very often, and is usually payed in from other accounts. It's nice to be able to view your savings at the click of a mouse though.

The Visa, Marks & Sp and Fosters icons are all credit cards. Each one of them can show money going through a card, either going into another account or (more usually) being spent on an expense.

As you can see, to actually see how much or little money is in an account, all you have to do is click on the relevant icon. But how do you actually put in transactions? Well, you can't in the demo version.

WIN A HARD DRIVE WITH HOME ACCOUNTS 2

All right, me ducks, listen up! Are you impressed with Digita's fully useable demo of *Home Accounts 2*? Have you even taken a look at it yet? No? Well you jolly well should, and not just because it can help you put your financial affairs into order.

Digita are generously giving anyone who uses this demo a chance to win one of Evesham Micros Reference 40 hard drive. This comes with its own power supply and a low-noise drive unit with a 40Mb capacity housed in a smart colour-coordinated metal case. All you have to do to get your chance to win it is answer a few very simple questions.

Six of the questions are based on features of the program, so you'll have to use the demo to find out the answers. The rest of the questions are about ducks. That's right, ducks. Why? Well, being a home accounts program, *Home Accounts 2* has that traditional symbol of English domesticity, the Flying Duck-on-the-Wall (Canardus Boeingae), as its emblem. No doubt you didn't really want to know that. Tough.



THE QUESTIONS

1 In which TV series did the hotelier say "Sorry, duck's off"?

2 Name the president who, after an unsuccessful assassination attempt on him, said to his wife "Honey, I forgot to duck"?

3 Which comedy team broadcast a supposed recording of Alaister Cooke being attacked by a duck?

4 What other foods normally accompany Peking or Crispy Duck?

5 *Home Accounts 2* uses Digita's HIP interface system. What does HIP stand for?

6 What is the name of the default colour palette?

7 When you create an income and expenditure report, how many styles of report can you choose from?

8 What is the Workbench icon for Savings Account?

9 What does the I button on the Calculator do?

10 *Home Accounts 2* has its own Notepad. How many lines?

How to enter

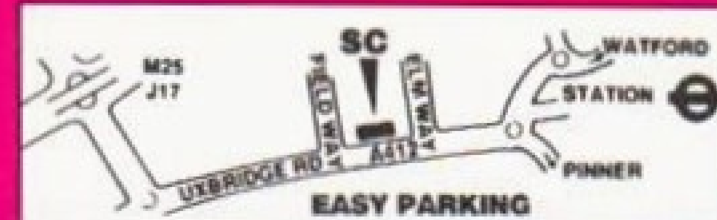
Write down all the answers on the back of a postcard along with your name, address and telephone number and send to: Digita Ducks Competition, *Amiga Format*, 29 Monmouth Street Bath BA1 2DL before Friday 13 December. Normal competition rules apply (see Page 149). Names and addresses may be used for mailing purposes by Digita (only) so please indicate if you would prefer not to receive any promotional material.



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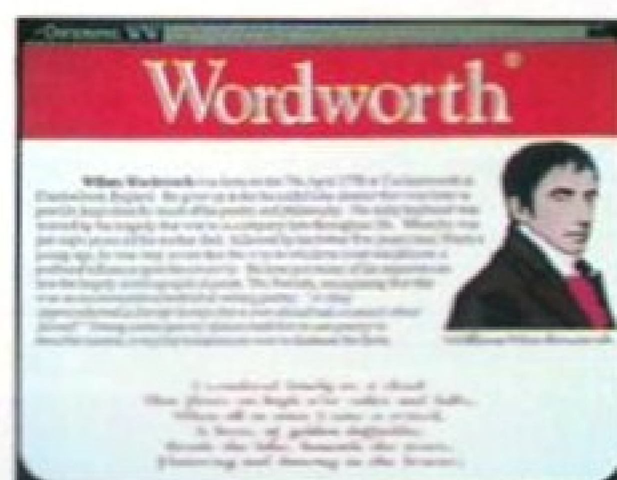
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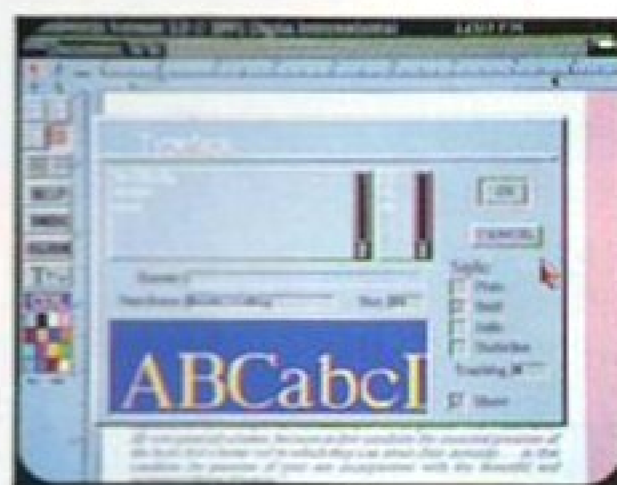
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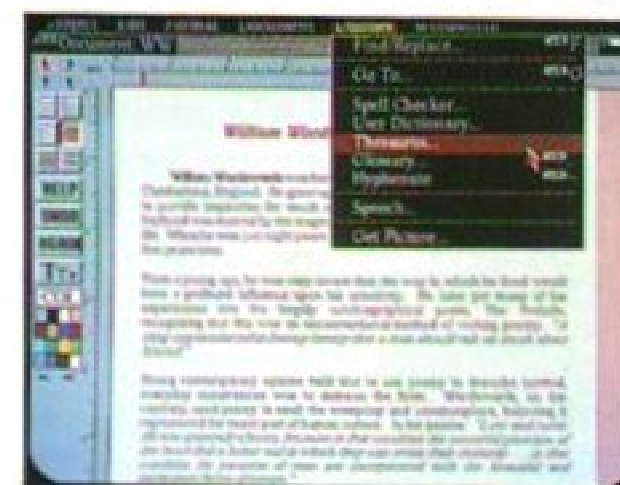


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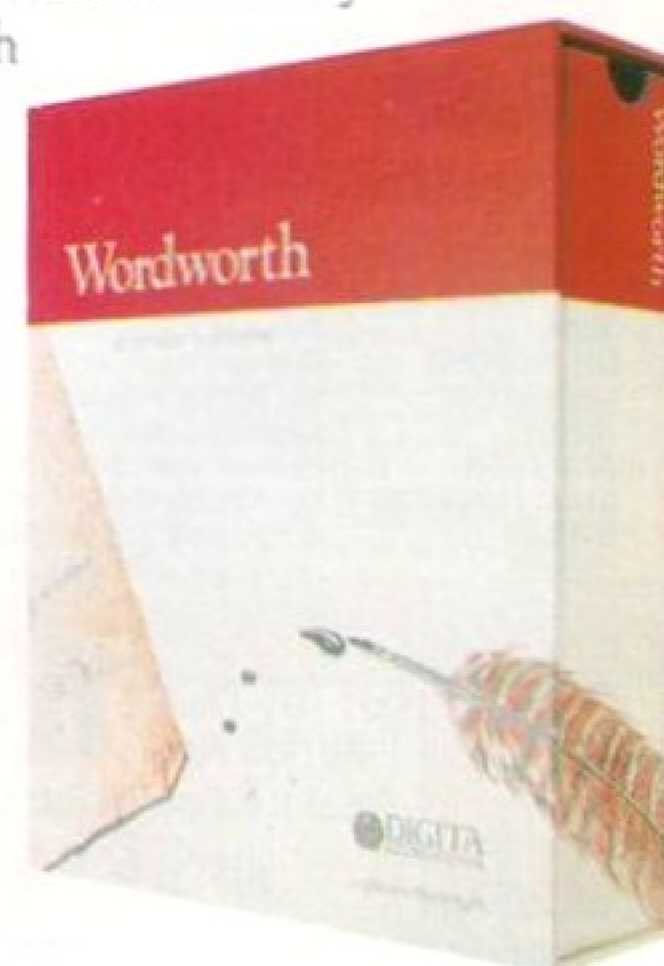


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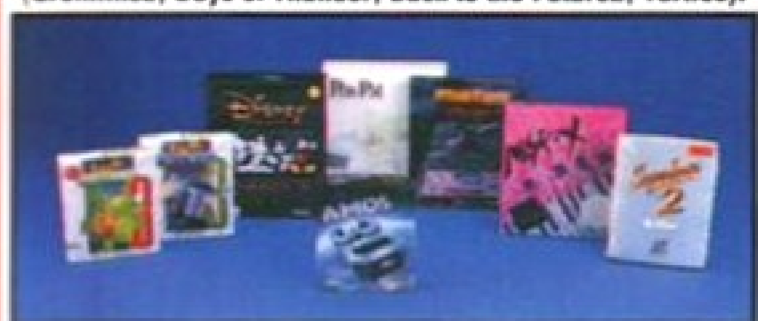
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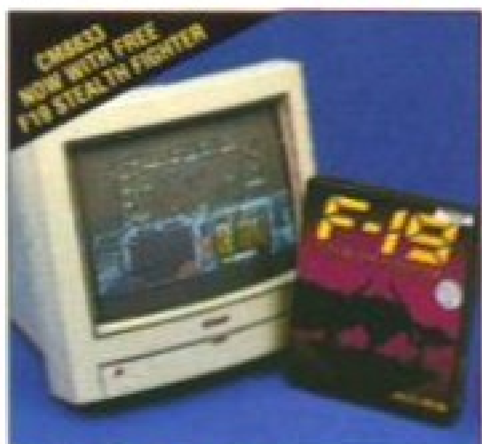
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It's called the A500 Plus, it's a completely new kind of Amiga and, perhaps most important of all, it's set to take over as the basic model. **Damien Noonan** tells you everything you need to know about it: and believe us, you do need to know about it...

Inside the new Amiga



WE ARE WITNESSING THE biggest advance in Amiga technology since the world's best home computer was launched six years ago. We had expected an A500 with Workbench 2 to appear: we had expected an A500 with the new ECS in it: we had expected an A500 with 1Mb of RAM installed on the board. All this has happened. But the complicated and surprising thing is that there's more to it than that: this is, in effect, a whole new kind of Amiga.

The word on the street is that the A500 Plus is to become the new standard for a base-level Amiga. All new A500s sold after a certain date, Commodore have told us, are to be Pluses (there's some confusion at the moment, because stocks of the older A500 are still hanging around). So there are a number of very important questions to be answered.

Whenever an upgraded computer is released, the advantages of the new system are inevitably accompanied by problems, not least of incompatibility. It's at times like this that you expect Commodore to be doing all the talking. Even as these pages are being printed, we're holding back for more information from Commodore, so you should turn Pages 239-243 for the very latest news. But in the meantime, here's the whole story as far as we have been able to piece it together.

Now to those questions. If you're buying a new Amiga, you need to know whether the advantages of the A500 Plus outweigh the problems and make it worth going for. If you already own an Amiga, you need to know how the A500 Plus is different and how you can go about upgrading. Only *Amiga Format* can even begin to give you the answers...

Workbench 2 is the first notable feature of the new Amiga. The latest version 2.04 comes on three disks: the Workbench disk itself, the Extras disk, and a Fonts disk which contains the new Outline fonts. We take a look at the new Workbench and its great improvements over the page, but basically it's just a smarter and easier-to-use version which makes Workbench a proper, viable WIMP system rather than the half-way house it used to be. It also allows for three new display modes.

Although the A3000 has had Workbench 2 for over a year, the latest update of the Amiga operating system has only just been made concrete in a new Kickstart ROM chip. If you should want to run Workbench 2 on a normal A500, all you have to do is fit a Kickstart 2.04 chip and get hold of the disks. Although the 1.3 Kickstart is only a 256K ROM and the new one is 512K, there isn't a problem because an A500 has the capacity to fit a bigger ROM. You don't need any other upgrade either, although you won't be able to use the new screen modes unless you also fit the new Enhanced Chip Set (more on that below).

So to sum up: the A500 Plus has the full Workbench 2 system and you can upgrade your A500 quite easily by buying the new Kickstart ROM, the disks and the manual. When the last Workbench change happened (version 1.2 to 1.3) an upgrade pack was released and cost around £50, so the new upgrade should cost about that.

The Enhanced Chip Set is the second prominent feature of the Plus. Most important of the ECS chips is the new Denise graphics chip. This carries the chip number 8373 HR (the old one is 8362) and is what creates the new screen modes: Super Hi-Res, Productivity and A2024. Only the first of these will interest most Amiga owners because the others require a multiscan monitor and an A2024 monitor respectively, but there's full details of them over the page. The new Denise also gives an improved display signal, making for better quality in graphics and video work.



The new Kickstart 2.04 ROM chip (highlighted) is 512K, but will happily fit into a normal A500 letting you use Workbench 2.

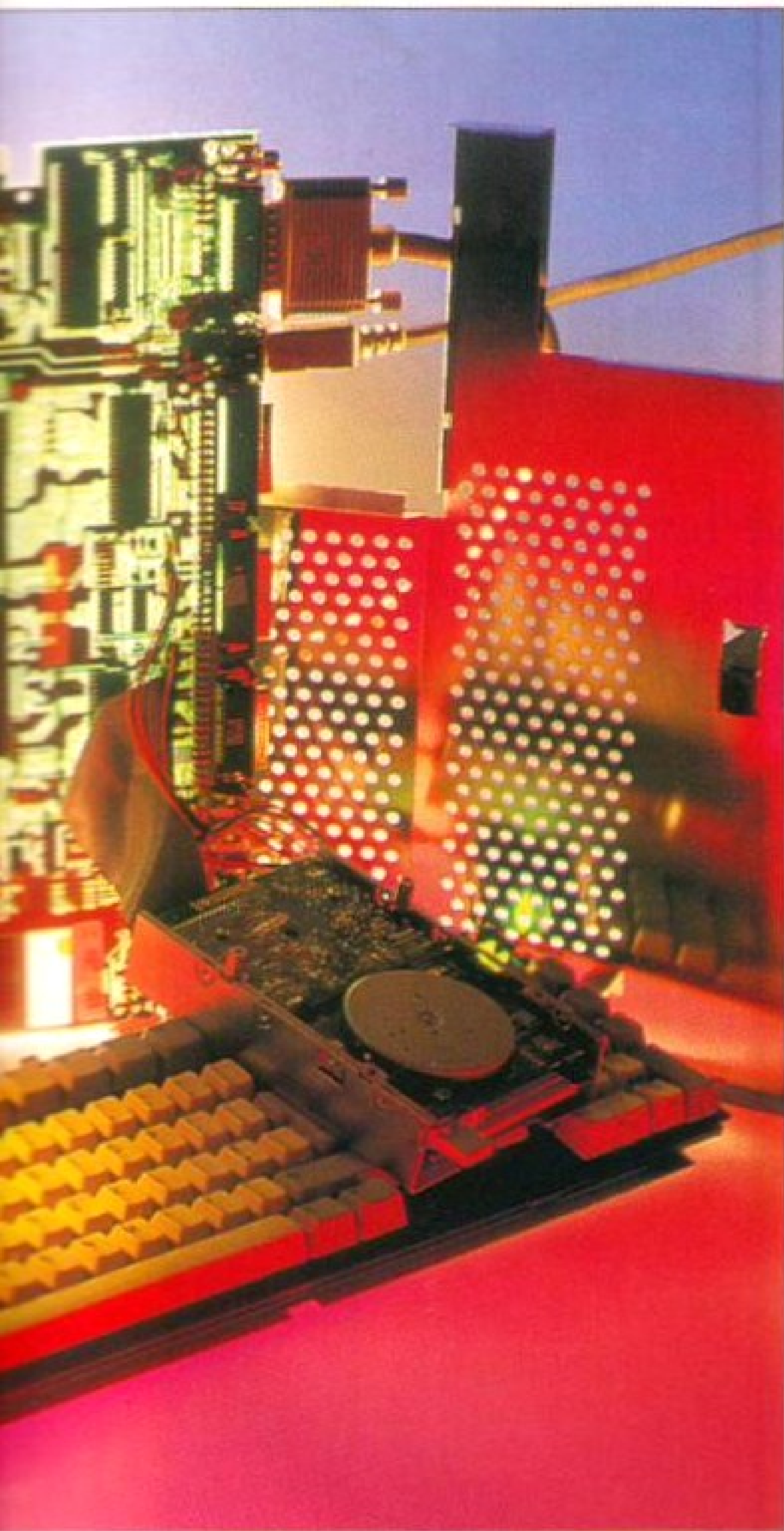
The ECS in the 500 Plus includes a new Fat Agnus (centre) but there is apparently no need to get this when you upgrade to ECS, so long as you have a Fatter Agnus already.

The A500 Plus also includes a new Agnus chip, numbered 8375 HR. As far as we can currently tell, there is no reason why you should get this chip if you're upgrading to ECS. Provided you have the fatter Agnus (numbered 8372A) which has been fitted to all new A500s since about June last year, you should be fine. The evidence? The new 1Mb A501 Plus RAM expansion has a jumper which you can set to either of these Agnuses.

Summing up again: the A500 Plus has the Enhanced Chip Set, composed of two new chips: a Denise and an Agnus. If you have an A500 and want to upgrade (to use the new screen displays) you will need to fit only the new Denise chip. This can already be bought and costs around £40.

A whole 1Mb of RAM fitted to the circuit board is the third notable feature of the A500 Plus. We've been expecting a 1Mb Amiga for a long time and it appeared as a stop-gap in the form of the A500 with A501 RAM expansion combo that appeared in the early Cartoon Classics packs. But now the true 1Mb Amiga 500 is here, and it brings a few surprises.

There are eight 1 Megabit memory chips on the A500 Plus board, giving 1 Megabyte in



all. The previous A500 models carried four chips, with four free spaces. And this is where the story really starts.

If you had an A500 with four chips and four spaces, you could already get extra memory chips put in to give you 1Mb on-board. You could also have all this memory as 'Chip RAM' (don't panic, we explain that in a minute). But there was a side-effect: it involved a modification (for which read 'knife attack') to the circuit board which effectively made the trapdoor expansion slot under the Amiga useless.

The new A500 Plus circuit board incorporates this physical change, sets up the whole 1Mb of memory as Chip RAM and still allows the trapdoor slot to be used. But there's a big change: the trapdoor expansion has a new connector. This not only means that old A500 trapdoor stuff will not plug into a Plus, but also gives rise to a whole new range of expansions for the Plus. As well as the new Commodore A501 Plus RAM expansion you can expect to see, for example, a new version of the KCS PC emulator designed especially for the Plus.

Now a quick word about Chip RAM. Effectively, the A500 Plus is the realisation of what the A500 should always have been, and this is true of the memory too. Part of what makes the Amiga special is that the custom chips are capable of accessing RAM without checking with the CPU, but they can only access Chip RAM. The other kind of RAM is Fast RAM, which only the CPU is allowed to touch, but which is quicker.

Any operations handled by the Blitter (a special bit inside Agnus which handles a lot of the graphics displays) need Chip RAM: the best example is Workbench's pull-down screens, every single one of which uses the Blitter and so eats up Chip RAM. The more Chip memory you have, the better for graphics-intensive stuff like paint programs, word processors with pictures in, DTP and so on.

So extra Chip memory is A Good Thing for most creative uses of the Amiga. On an older Amiga, even if you expanded it up to the maximum 9Mb, all but the original 512K would be Fast RAM. The A500 Plus can be expanded to a maximum of 10Mb and we believe, though we have yet to confirm this, that not only the internal 1Mb but also a second 1Mb of this can be Chip memory.

The only trouble with this is that the lack of Fast memory on an A500 Plus is likely to be the biggest source of software incompatibility. Many programs that were written to use an expanded Amiga were configured by the programmer to expect 512K of Fast memory, which the program won't find on a Plus. Anything that loads via Workbench shouldn't have this problem, because it features the NoFastMem and FastMemFirst memory-handling patches: but games for 1Mb that don't use Workbench could have problems.

To sum up: the A500 Plus features 1Mb of Chip RAM and a new kind of trapdoor connector. There is no good reason why you should want to upgrade and if you did the upgrade would probably involve replacing the main PCB entirely. This would not necessarily be hugely expensive: getting the latest board for our 2000 recently cost only £85. You can gain access to extra Chip RAM by fitting other expansions if you need to, but they do tend to be quite expensive.

The bottom line is that the A500 Plus is an excellent machine, making the Amiga all that it should be: we recommend it and wholeheartedly approve of its arrival. But it's not necessarily that simple. There remains the question of compatibility. Part Two of the story of the A500 Plus starts on p239...



WHAT'S THE SECRET OF THE A500 PLUS?

On first appearances, it looks just like an ordinary Amiga 500. The case is exactly the same size, colour and design.



You notice the A500 Plus badge and a subtle change to the keyboard: an extra blank key by the shortened Return key, matched by another blank key on the left-hand side by a shortened Shift key. Why are they there? Well, they're just spares. But these are the only external clues to the identity of our mysterious Amiga.



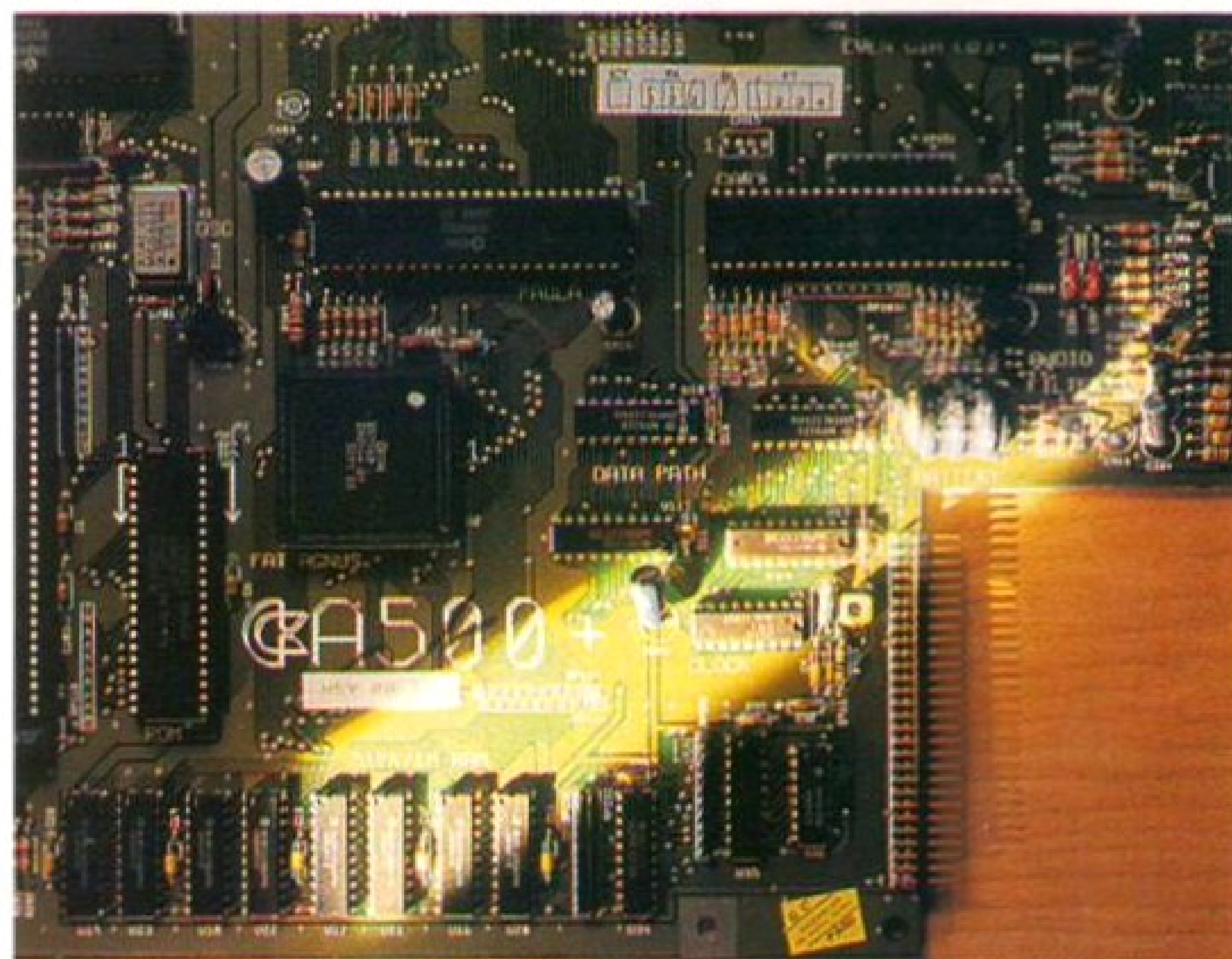
Until you switch on, that is. Now you get the first real idea of what it is that makes an A500 Plus: this A500 has Kickstart 2.04, with a new 'insert disk' animation to replace the boring old hand-holding-a-disk screen.



By now, you should have spotted the disks and manuals in the box. It's the full Workbench Version 2.04. So that's one major discovery. But we're going to have to go inside the machine to find out more...



Ooh, what a giveaway! Knock me down with a feather if that's not a new Denise chip! That means that this Amiga is fitted with the Enhanced Chip Set. Major discovery two.



But there's the knockout blow: A500+ in big letters right across the board. This is, in effect, not just a revision of the normal A500: this is a completely new machine. Notice the small, oblong chips in a row along the bottom: that's 1Mb of chip RAM on the board. And if you look closely, you can see the clock chip and its back-up battery clearly labelled. And do you want to know what really changes things? Well, if you know the Amiga well, carefully examine the connector for trapdoor slot expansions. It's changed. Yep, this is a new Amiga sure enough...

What's ne Workben

It's been around on the A3000 for over a year operating system is finalised, encoded on a Kick across the Amiga range. **Damien Noonan** sees

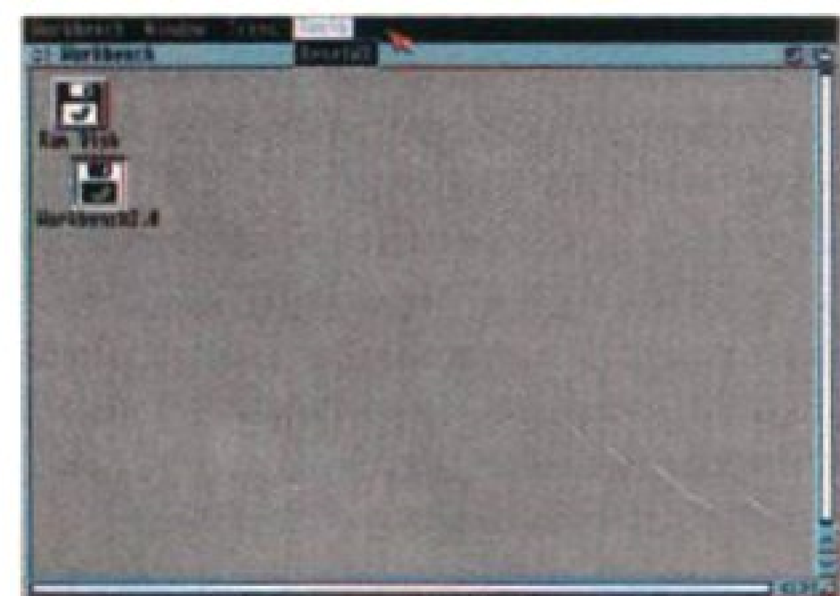
Technically speaking, it's Workbench version 2.04. It's the very latest version of the Amiga operating system and it seems likely to stay the standard for some considerable time to come. It's notable for the inclusion of lots more on the Kickstart chip, now a 512K rather than 256K ROM. It features new programs, three new screen modes and a new alternative approach to fonts.

But above all, it's Workbench refined so that it looks better and does properly what it was always supposed to do: that is be a friendly and accessible graphic interface to give you easy control over the power hidden in the computer.

Most of the changes to Workbench are visible, but there's one fundamental change that you'll never see. This is the Fast Filing System for floppy disk drives. Workbench 1.3 introduced the FFS for hard drives, but now even those of us with a floppy-based system can enjoy faster access times and so less fraying of the old patience.

Perhaps the most surprising change is the manual. It's very good indeed, even for beginners, with careful presentation and many notes to explain the main thread of the text. But that's enough of the generalities: let's get down to specifics.

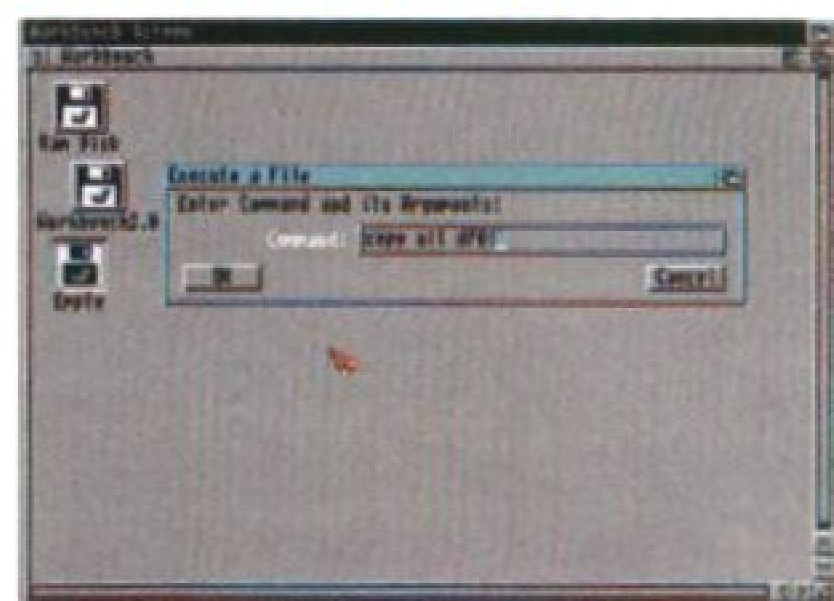
FIRST IMPRESSIONS



The general look and feel of the new Workbench is smarter and cleaner, partly thanks to the more restrained pre-set colours and partly due to the use of the 'embossed' look. The main Workbench window now appears as a window rather than a screen (it appears to be further away) and has a close gadget. The other thing to notice is that next to the Depth gadget in the top-right corner of every window there is now also a Zoom gadget which reduces the window to minimum size or flips it back to normal when clicked.

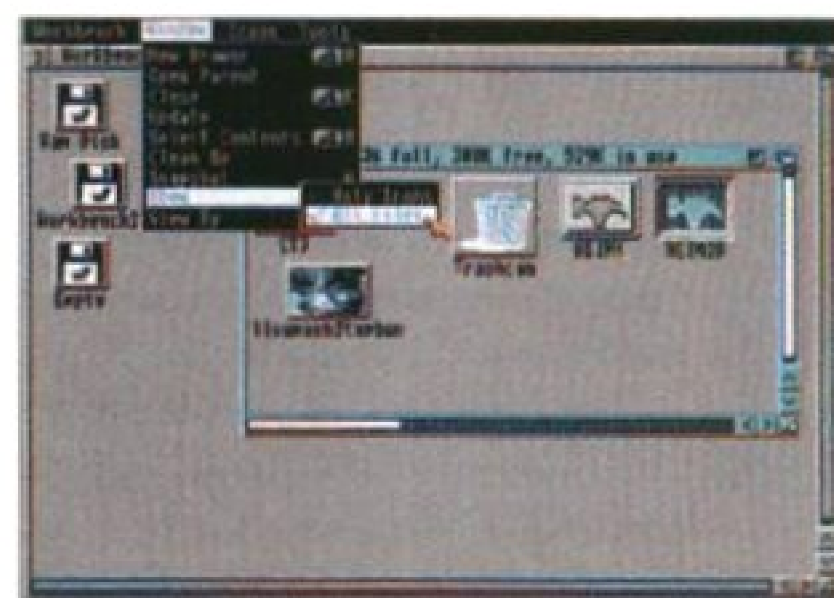
The Tools menu on the right-hand side is actually an application launcher: many WB2 -compatible programs will appear as a menu item here so that you can run them simply by selecting the menu item. It's a useful idea, but only people with a hard disk (and lots of programs available on it) will benefit to any extent.

WORKBENCH MENU



The Border option can be checked to make the Workbench window stop being a window and revert to a screen. The Execute Command option rather handily brings up a requester from which you can execute a single CLI command, saving opening the Shell. Rather neat. Redraw All will redraw evey window in case of screen glitch . Update All is the most interesting option: it makes visible any hidden changes that you might have made using the Shell or CLI, on the Workbench screen.

SHOW ALL FILES



In the Windows menu is one of the most exciting developments of Workbench 2. It's now become a proper graphic interface, because even if a file doesn't have a proper icon, it can be displayed in a window with a 'pseudo-icon'. These icons can be used in just the same way as real ones: so you no longer need to use the CLI to duplicate and move files. Drawers and programs, too, can have pseudo-icons. It's a big step on for the Amiga.

VIEW BY...



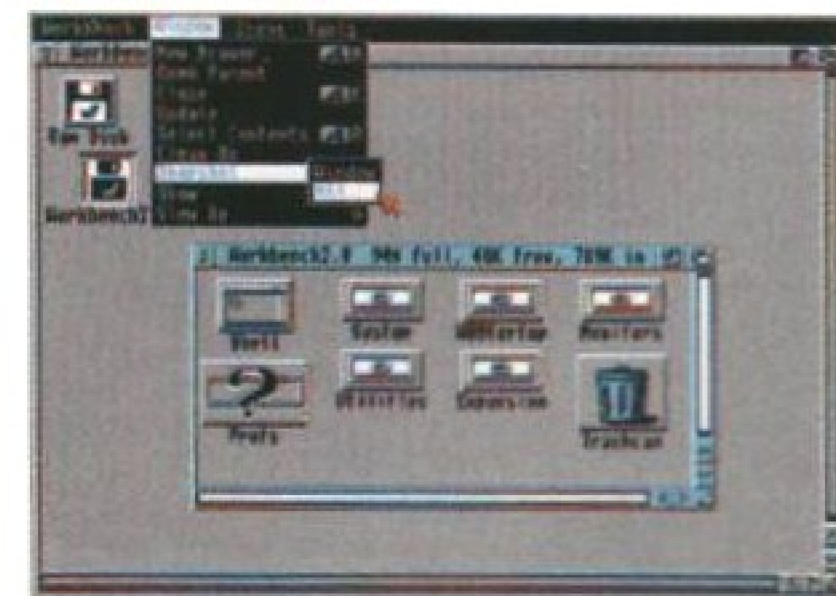
Another feature of a proper WIMP computer is the ability to view files by name rather than just as icons. One useful feature, apart from it saving space, is lots of useful info is displayed next to the name: file size or, if it is a drawer or something else, type; protection status (read, write, execute, delete); and creation date and time. You can also view by date to find latest versions, or by size to pick out what's eating disk space.

NEW DRAWER



"Thank goodness for that!" Amiga users up and down the country will be saying. At last there's the ability to create a new drawer in any active window, the sensible way of doing things. now you can get rid of that irritatingly pointless Empty drawer you always had lying around. A Rename requester automatically appears to ledt you give the new drawer a name. Notice the sensible change here, too: the Rename requester is now a proper one, with 'OK' and 'Cancel' buttons.

OTHER WINDOW MENU ITEMS



Open parent is very sensible: it simply brings to front or opens the parent of the current drawer (the drawer that the current drawer is in). It's useful. Update works like Update all, making visible changes you've done in the CLI, but just for the active window. Select contents selects all the icons in a drawer, which again is useful. Clean up places icons tidily around the drawer, while Snapshot is now much more sensible, featuring two different options. Snapshot Window saves the size, position and view mode of the window but not icon position, while Snapshot All does icon positions too. You no longer have to select everything in a window first.

THOSE NEW SCREEN MODES IN FULL!

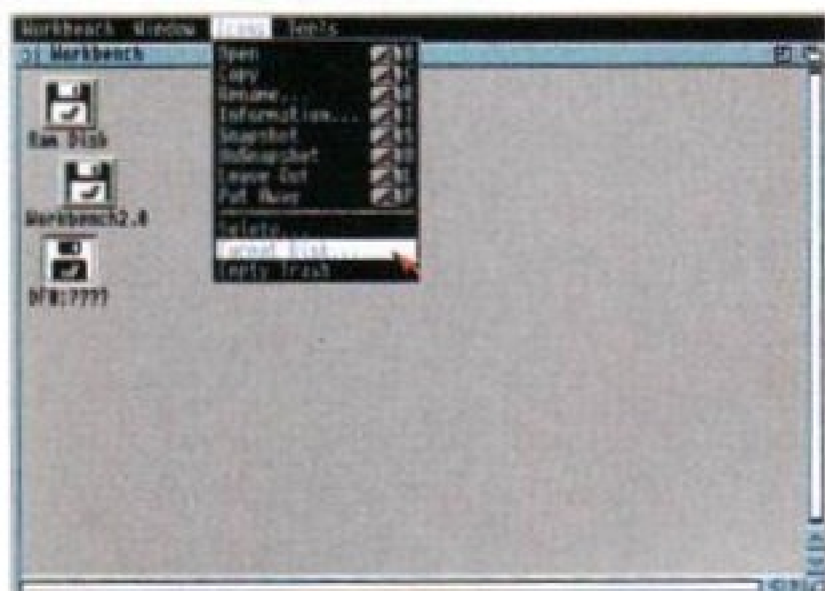
Along with 16-colour Hi-res, there are three new high-resolution screen modes in Workbench 2, though you'll need the Enhanced Chip Set for all of them, a multiscan monitor for the second and specifically an A2024 monitor for the third. Here's the details.

Name	Resolution	Maximum colours
Hi-Res	640 wide, 256 high	16 colours
Hi-Res Interlaced	640 wide, 512 high	16 colours
Super-Hi-Res	1280 wide, 256 high	4 colours
Super-Hi-Res Interlaced	1280 wide, 512 high	4 colours
Productivity	640 wide, 480 high	4 colours
Productivity Interlaced	640 wide, 960 high	4 colours
A2024_10Hz	1008 wide, 800 high	4 greyscales
A2024_15Hz	1008 wide, 800 high	4 greyscales

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...ut now the latest version of the ...rt ROM chip and appearing right ...at it has to offer.

FORMATTING AND COPYING DISKS



In the Icons menu you will now find an option that is called Format which is simply to format disks with, rather than Initialise. It's only a name change, but it makes much more sense if only because everyone talks about 'formatting' a disk, rather than 'Initializing" them. Interestingly too, blank unformatted disks now appear on the screen as df0:???? rather than df0:BAD, which kind of makes sense also. Disk copying is now improvced tenfold, with a box appearing on single-drive systems to warn you how many swaps the process will involve. The only down side to this is that you now actually have to click on the Continue gadget after each individual disk swap! But that's really a very small price to have to pay: after all, most people would prefer an easier disk copy procedure.

MORE ON THE ICONS MENU



Information works pretty much as Info did before, supplying icon info to let you change tool types and RWED flagging. Leave Out allows you to leave a drawer or other icon lying around on the Workbench screen and still use it, while Put Away puts it back where it belongs: clever stuff, considering the way the Workbench system works. The hidden subtext to this is that the way Workbench finds the path to whatever an icon represents has been much improved over the fairly moronic WB1.3 style. Delete now works properly, deleting not just the icon but also all files associated with it, and even warning you what's going to make sure you don't accidentally delete things. Empty trash also now deletes things properly, as opposed to giving you obscure CLI error codes.

OUTLINE FONTS

As well as the ordinary fonts or (typefaces) on the Extras disk (which include Helvetica, Times and Courier) there is also a number of Outline fonts and a program called Fountain with which to install them. Outline fonts are licensed from Agfa and are professional-standard 'scaleable' fonts.

Outline fonts are like structured drawings compared to bitmaps: whatever size you make them, the quality remains the same. In other words, whereas normal Amiga typefaces rely on you having all the different sizes stored on disk, Outline fonts are almost infinitely variable. You set them up with the initial sizes you want displayed in a menu, but you can make them any size you want. The only problem is that if you don't have a hard drive, you need two floppy drives to use them.

It's too large a subject to go into detail on here, but Outline fonts are now used particularly by DTP programs. Their inclusion puts the Amiga firmly in the professional arena.

THE COMMODITIES

The Commodities are a number of small but useful programs on the Extras disk. They can be set up using the Exchange program on the main disk.

AUTOPOINT
Any window under the mouse pointer is automatically active.

BLANKER
A screen saver: blanks the screen after a set period of inactivity.

CLICKTOFRONT
You only have to double-click in a window to bring it to front.

FKEY
Lets you assign text to Function keys: use it for often-used CLI commands.

IHELP
Lets you use the keyboard for things normally done only with the mouse.

NOCAPSLOCK
Temporarily disables the Caps Lock key.

NOW ON THE EXTRAS DISK...

There's a number of new programs available on ther Extras disk. Briefly, this is what they are and do.

MEMACS
The proper decent text editor.

ICONEDIT
Lets you edit Workbench icons.

CALCULATOR
Pretty much as before.

CMD
Redirects printer output to a file.

COLORS
Changes the colours of any program screen running.

GRAPHICDUMP
Prints the screen display.

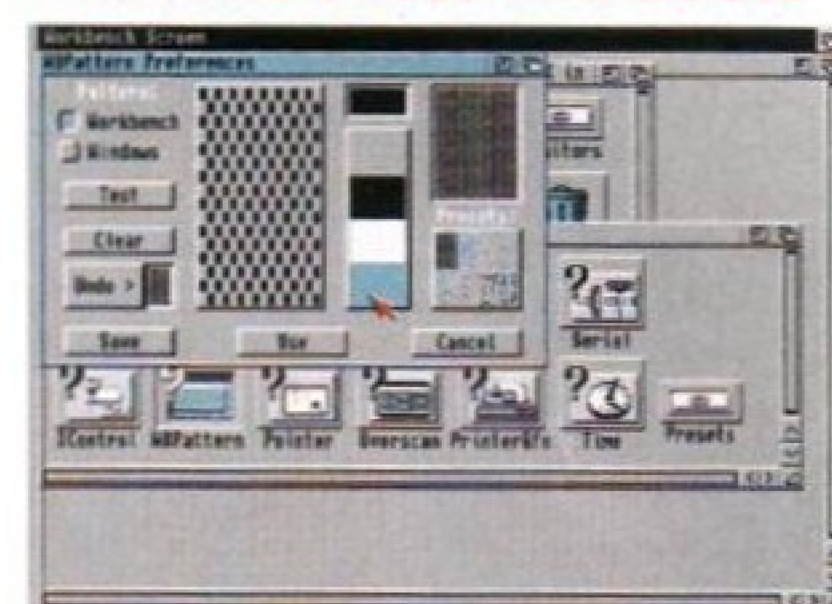
INITPRINTER
Sends Preferences set-ups to initialize printer.

KEYSHOW
Displays keyboard to show what key does what when Ctrl, Alt or Shift is used.

PRINTFILES
Batch prints multiple files.

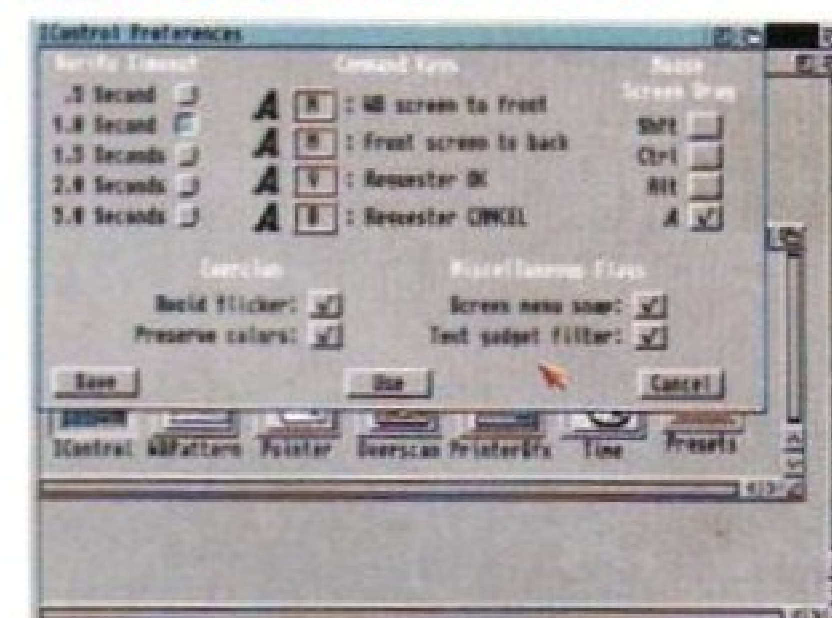
COMMODITIES
A bunch of small programs, listed separately.

PREFERENCES: THE LOOK



The Preferences programs are broken down into smaller and more sensible units. You can still change the colours with Palette, while there's a new facility called WBPattern that lets you create a patterned background on your Workbench screen. You can now choose any font for the text on all screens using the Font program.

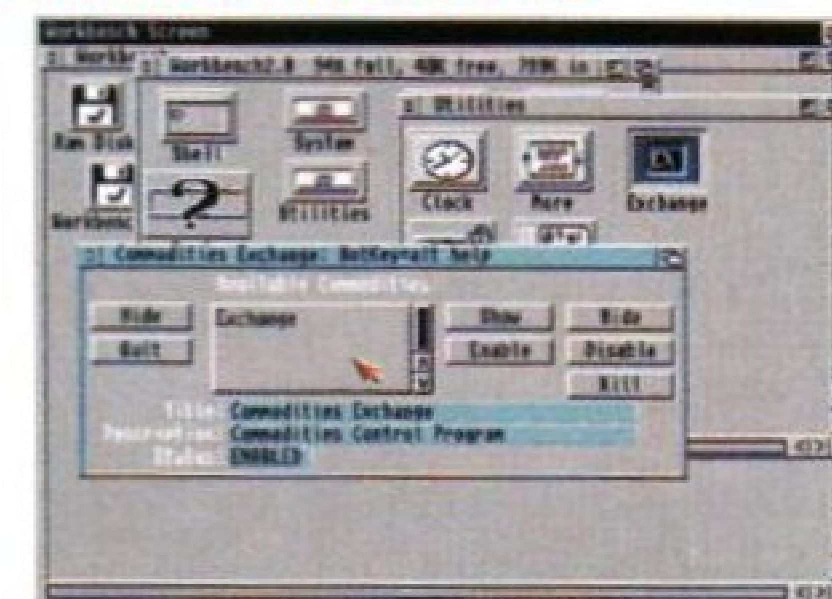
PREFERENCES: THE PRACTICALITIES



Printer driver set-up is made much easier by a visual display and the ability to save various presets, while a separate PrinterGFX program allows you to tweak print-out quality and set dithering. The Serial interface can be set up for easier comms and degree of overscan can be controlled. Screen mode can be set with a new program, while prhaps best of all the IControl program allows you to change keyboard shortcuts to anything you want.

THE WBSTARTUP DRAWER
No more messing around editing the start-up sequence if you want to run programs when Workbench is loaded. Now that everything has an icon, all you need to do is drop it into the start-up drawer and it will run. The British keyboard layout, setmapGB, can be slung in here, for instance. You'll already find the Mode_Names program in here, which gives system names to the display modes on start-up.

EXTRA PROGRAMS



There's quite a few extras that have been included on to the main Workbench disk. As well as the Say speech utility there's the text displayer More and also the IFF viewer Display. Before, you could only get these via PD. There's also been added the Exchange utility which lets you install and run programs from the Commodities drawer on the Extras disk.

What you won't find on the Extras disk however is AmigaBasic – yes I'm afraid that old workhorse has been put out to grass. And probably about time too.

Out of luck in Outer Space

SUSPICIOUS CARGO

Starring JONAH HAYES



When you need something transported in space, and you don't want inquisitive customs folk asking questions, or tiresome legal documentation, then 'Lady Luck' is the ship, and Jonah Hayes is your man .....This time though he's bitten off more than he can chew - his cargo is alive (genetically speaking), dangerous and sought after by a rival company who'll stop at nothing to cripple his dodgy tramp freighter and take over the job!.

An interactive adventure game set in the grand cyberpunk tradition with stunning action sequences, excellent animated location graphics, and a warped sense of humour thrown in for good measure.





Screenshots from various formats.







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A Gremlin Graphics Production



Programmed by:
EXILE DESIGN

Music and SFX
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And now, it's your turn to go up against the most dangerous enemies our environment has ever faced - Looten Plunder, Duke Nukem, Hoggish Greedly, Dr Blight and more.

The forces of Earth, Fire, Wind, Water and Heart are yours. Put them together and become Captain Planet. Your Eco-copter is waiting.



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Also available on video





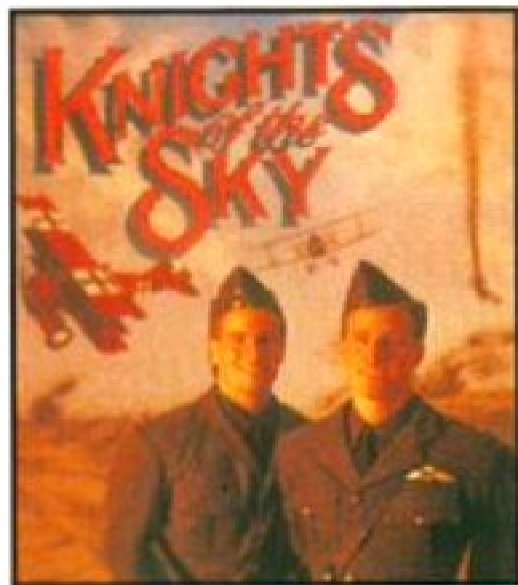






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What will you cha

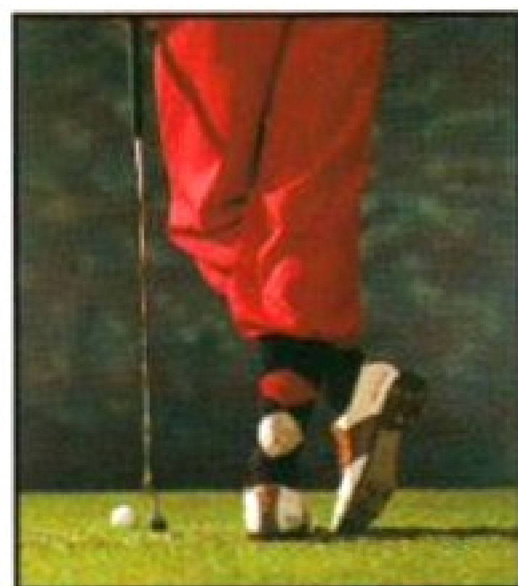


Knights of the Sky

Daring, Duels and Dogfights.

● Become a WWI flying ace, dogfighting with the greatest combat pilots ever.

● Help the Allies win the war in an accurate re-creation of the battle for control of the skies of Europe.

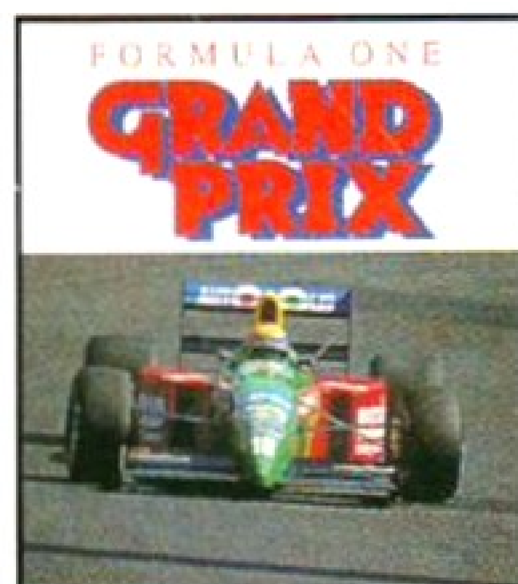


MicroProse Golf

So accurate it will improve your game!

● The greens and fairways are brought to life by stunning 3-D technology viewed from numerous 'TV' camera positions.

● Change club, stance, foot position and swing to see accurately modelled results on any of six courses.

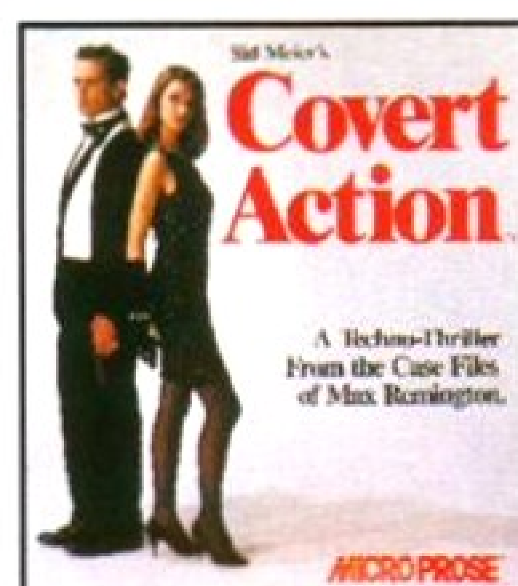


Formula One Grand Prix

Crashing gears, smoke, roaring engines and burning rubber

● Race on all 16 Grand Prix circuits for any of the current teams in an attempt to be Formula One champion.

● Study the track, fine tune your car, and strap on your seat belt for the most realistic racing simulation short of driving a real F1 car.



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Solve the mysteries of international espionage.

● Tap phone lines, crack complex codes and break into buildings around the globe.

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From a wardrobe brimming with classics it can be difficult to make a choice. You can slip into something different every night.

Produced to the highest quality with rigorous attention to detail, the MicroProse software collection gives you experience after experience, time after time.

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ou're not properly dressed without it.

Knightmare



"You are setting forth into another place, another time, another world," said Treguard, The Dungeon Master. "And what makes you think that you four mere mortals will succeed in the Quest, when so many others have failed?"

I understood, at that moment, that our mission was going to take all our endurance, all our collective skill, and, most of all a depth of courage, that I wasn't sure we possessed.

Ever since ITV's award-winning series hit our screens, the world has been waiting for a computer game worthy of the name. The wait is over.

Tony Crowther's amazing re-creation has everything.

Using the same game system that made 'Captive' adventure game of the year for 1990, 'Knightmare' makes dungeons and dragons games seem like newts splashing around in a muddy puddle.

'Knightmare' is a sophisticated role-playing adventure where you are challenged to solve complex puzzles, logic problems and riddles that reveal a rich, ever-more rewarding storyline.

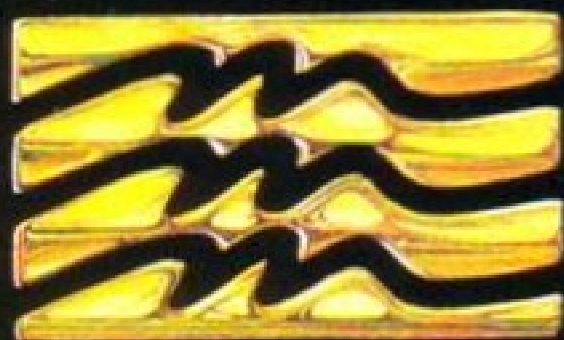
Your journey takes you deep into the dungeons of Dunshelm, to a cataclysmic meeting with Lord Fear and the unthinkably horrible FrightKnight.

Whether or not the meeting is terminal is up to you. You will need wisdom, tenacity, alacrity and, above all, courage.

But you have all those things, don't you...?



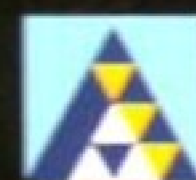
BROADSWORD



MINDSCAPE

Available for Amiga & Atari ST

Written by Tony Crowther.



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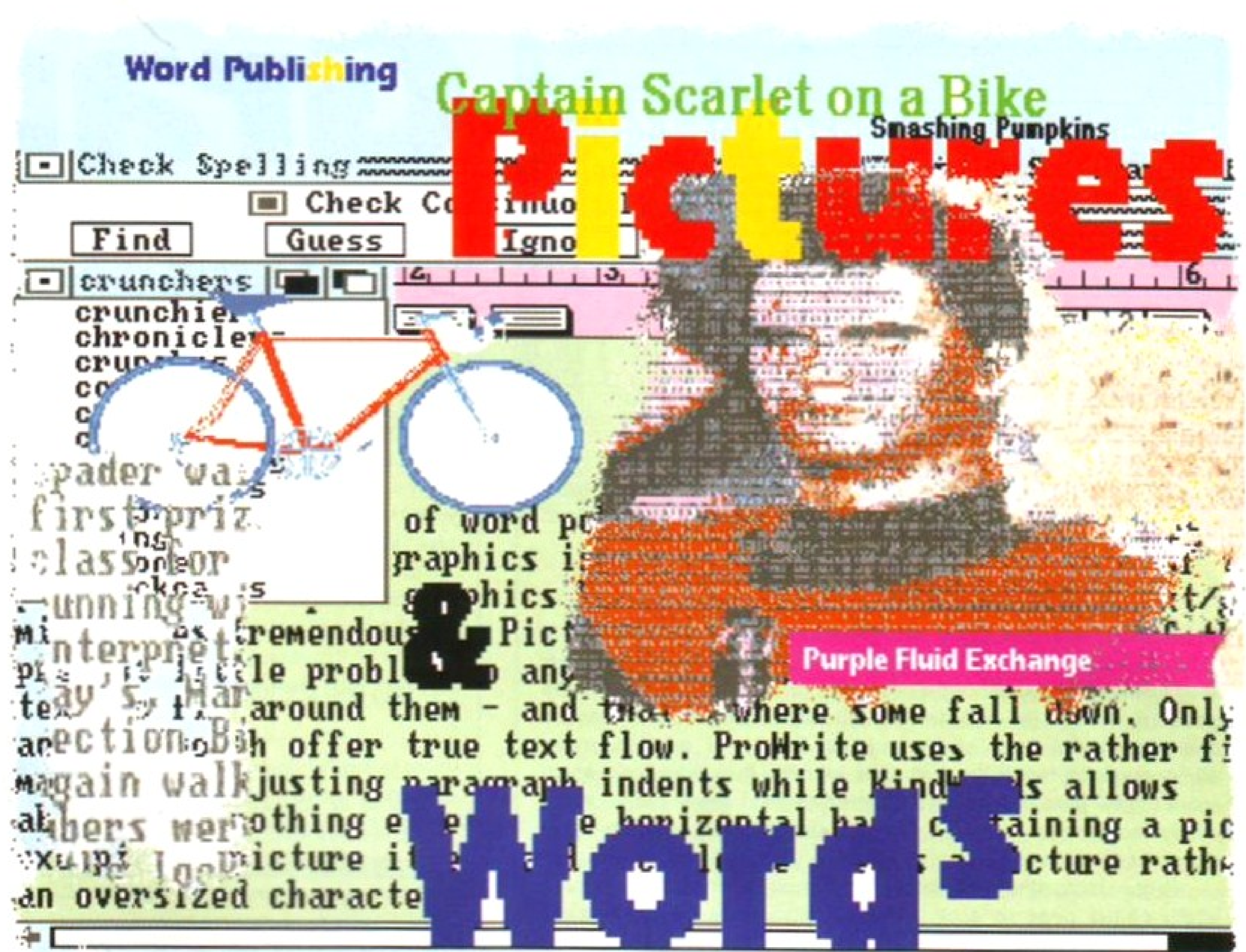
Are you in the picture

The word processor allowed you to proof your pages before printing, and to cut and paste text as you wished. Now word publishers allow you to import pictures and graphics without having to use a DTP package. We've compared five on their writing, printing and graphic abilities...

THE WORD PROCESSOR is that ever-forgiving typewriter for the novice and expert alike. Facilities such as cut and paste, search and replace, mail merge and spelling checker are now found on virtually every modern word processor. The one factor missing, though, for many people is the facility to mix text and graphics into the same document without resorting to scissors and glue - the origin of the term 'cut and paste' which has been practiced by publishers for years. With advances in technology even the most traditional publishers are now turning to the computer for typesetting and layout, and so can Amiga users.

Word publishers are a sort of halfway house between pure text editors and desktop publishing packages which attempt to combine both types of program in to one package. Unfortunately, in their attempt to be all things to all men they tend to turn out sadly lacking in all directions. The five word publishers tested here can all be used for typing text as well as importing pictures that are produced by paint packages.

They also have some other, quite unique, facilities, though, like Wordworth's speech option and some which are common to most such as page numbering and mail-merge. None of the programs are suitable for serious DTP work, but for the hobbyist or small businessman a variety of projects are possible but they would founder with a plain word processor. For instance if you fancy setting up a fanzine you don't really need a full-blown DTP system. All you want initially is the facility to type your own editorial, import text sent in on disk by contributors, and to jazz the whole thing up with a few well-chosen illustrations - screen grabs from games perhaps, or diagrams showing DIY projects. With carefully chosen graphics and fonts you should be able to achieve a very acceptable result and unless you are well financed you'll be working in black-and-white for the final product so colour distortion is no problem.



Another use for a word publisher is school and college work. Now that such a lot of study is project based (and marks are assessed on the presentation as well as the content of the project) it makes sense to produce the best impression possible. Imagine handing in a neatly illustrated essay (in colour if you have access to a suitable printer) instead of reams of untidy handwriting and messy diagrams.

Do you run a small business and want to save money on printers' bills by producing advertising artwork yourself? If so, use a decent word publisher to produce camera-ready copy for yourself, your clients or even other local businesses. Would the pubs and restaurants in your area like neatly-presented menus, or the local shop a handbill designed and printed for door-to-door delivery in the area? All the word publishers in this feature are capable of such tasks - although some with more ease than others.

If you don't need powerful text-crunching facilities these packages are perfectly adequate word processors – especially as they come equipped with good spelling checkers, most with a thesaurus and some even with grammar and style checkers.

With the exception of *Kindwords*, none of the systems covered here make any attempt to correct image-aspect ratios. This means what you see on screen is not quite what comes out on the page; at least not with a simple nine-pin printer. Only *Pen Pal* gives any hint of this on the box as pictures are shown in the form of screen grabs and printed pages. Close examination reveals that the screen image must be stretched to obtain the correct printed results. This is a feature of the Amiga and we would have liked to see the systems make some attempt to correct it themselves.

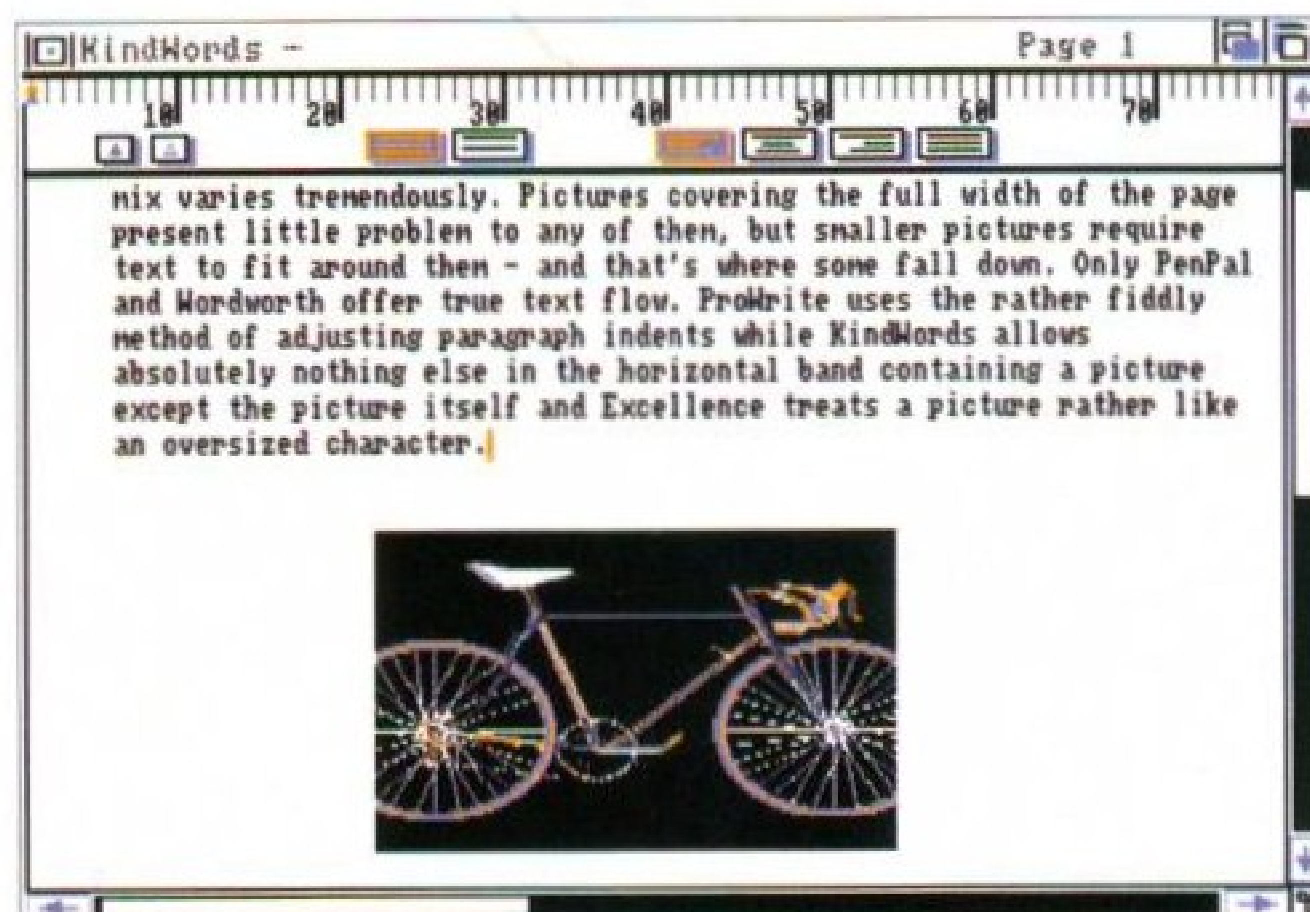
THE ALTERNATIVE - SEPARATE WP + DTP

At its simplest a word processor is a typewriter which uses no paper until the typist is satisfied with spelling, grammar and so on. The screen is used as temporary sheets of paper where text can be rubbed out, switched around, rewritten and proof-read before committing the work to print. Unfortunately word processors, while powerful at text handling, are not designed to handle graphics too. When a mixture of text and graphics is required the standard response is to turn to a desktop publishing program.

DTP packages have the same limitations as word processors but from the opposite direction. They boast sophisticated graphic handling and layout capabilities such as graphic resizing, text columns and font manipulation, yet are poorly featured when it comes to typing in oceans of text quickly and simply or originating graphics. Amiga-users who are seriously considering any sort of publishing must therefore buy three different packages, a word processor for typing, a paint package for originating pictures and illustrations, and a DTP package to put the two together and lay-out the final result.

Word publishers are an attempt to combine two of the three ingredients - word processors and DTP - and so allow text to be typed into the program in which it will be used while at the same time offering graphic handling and layout facilities. The only extra package required is one to draw the pictures, and not even that with the wealth of graphics available from the Public Domain where full-colour full screen graphics and a wide variety of clip art may easily be found.

Graphics



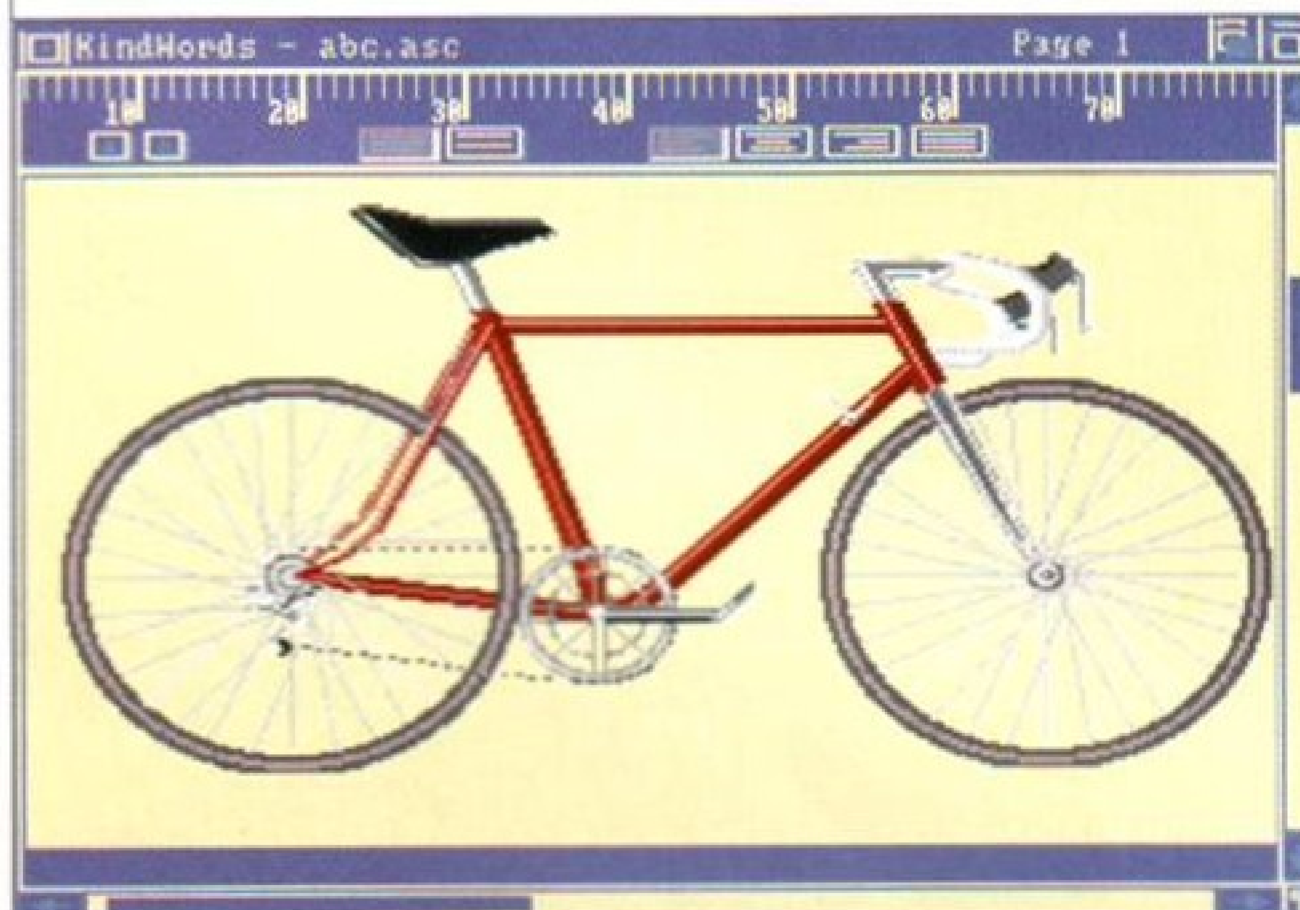
KINDWORDS 2

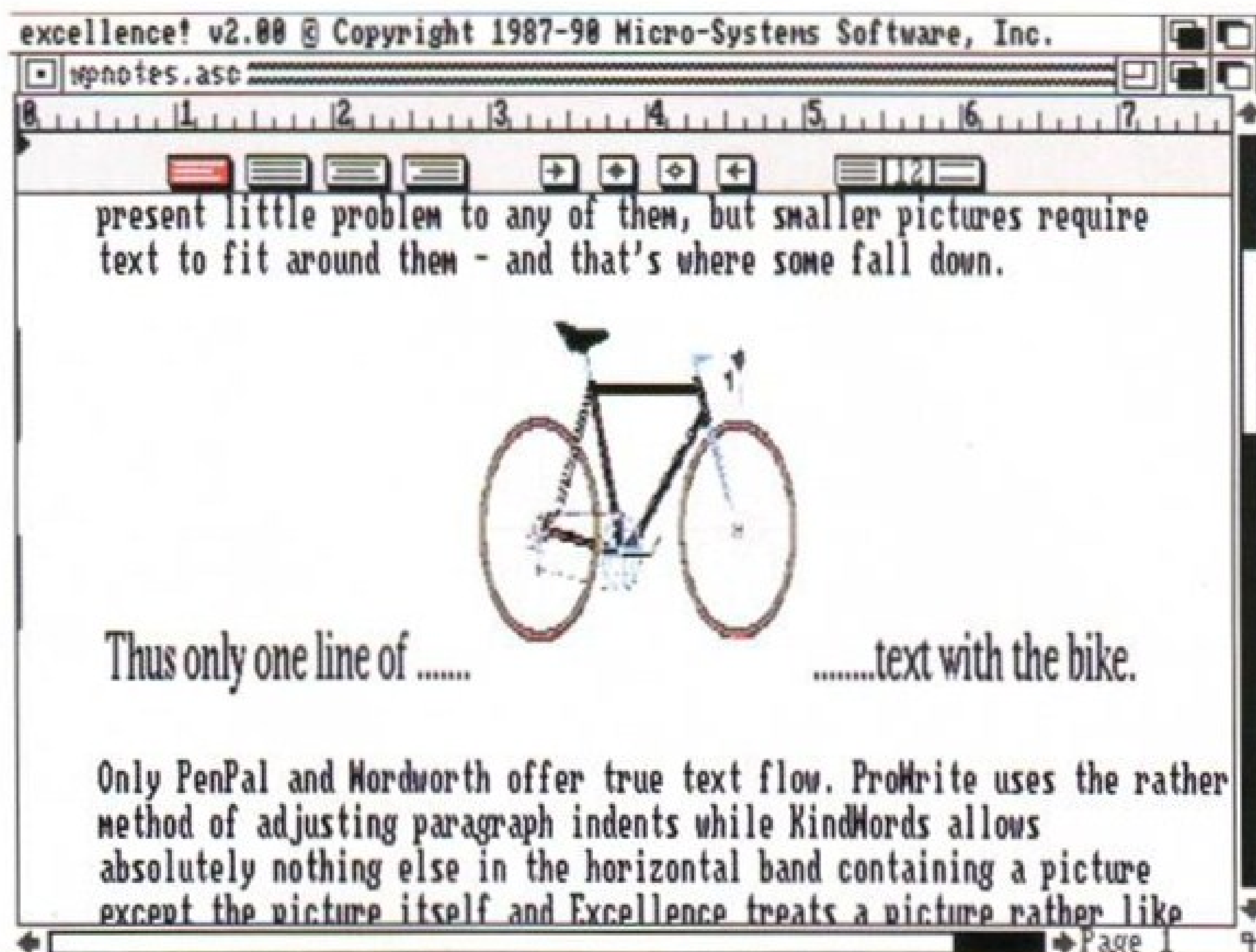
This is probably the great grandfather of them all, *Kindwords* was the original Amiga word publisher. Even in its current version (although it is without a doubt the cheapest of the packages covered here) it is by far the crudest. Three screen modes are supported: four, eight and 16 colours - and they are all in medium resolution. At first glance, this may well seem more useful than being just restricted to a relatively bland eight colour screen, and in many ways it is too. However, the story does not stop there.

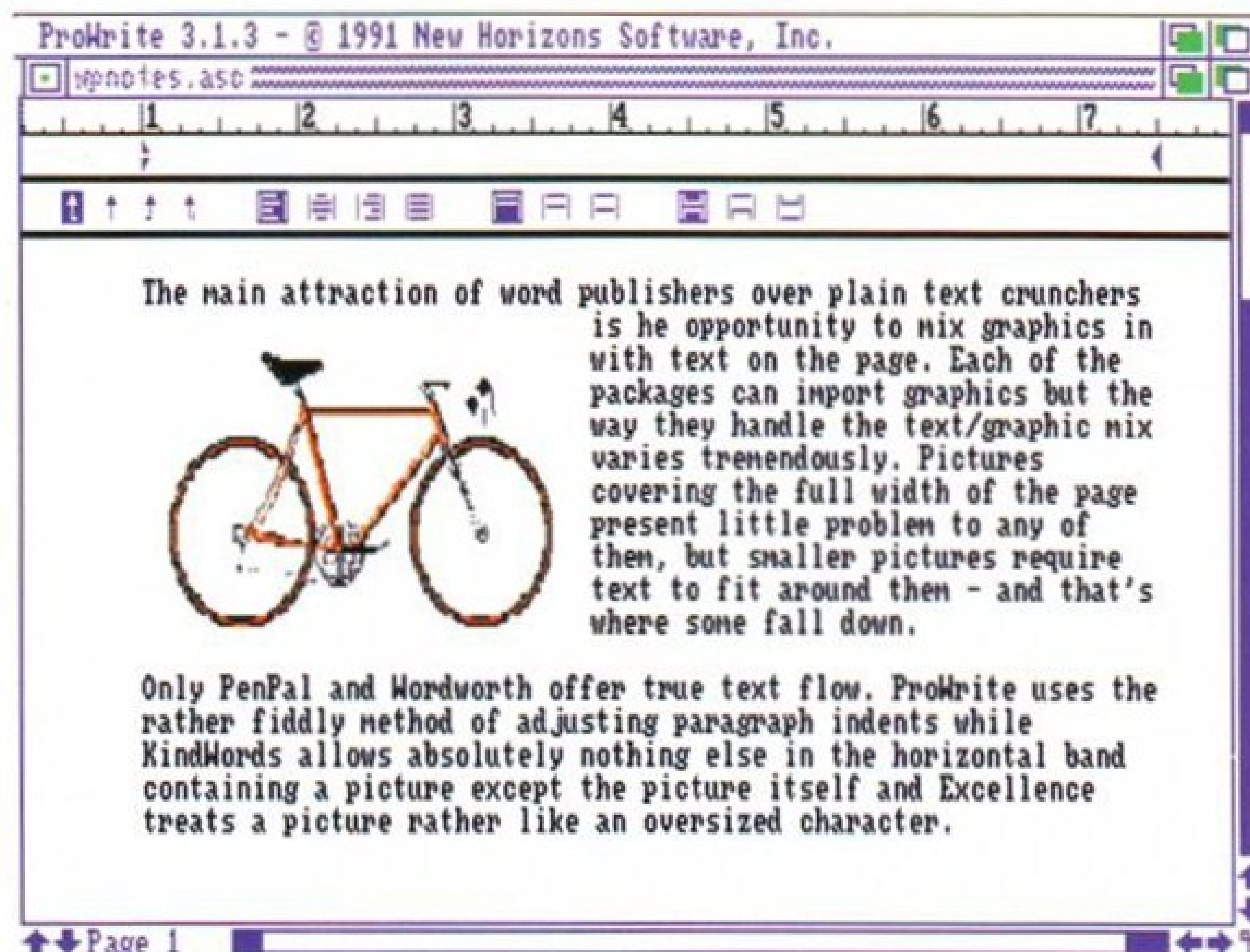
When importing graphics, *Kindwords* allocates the whole width of the page to each picture - regardless of its physical dimensions. Nothing else can be placed in that space - not even another similar-sized picture; and this limits its usefulness enormously unless you just happen to be working exclusively with full-width pictures. Typically, full-width graphics might be used as part of headlines or perhaps demographics dropped into the text at convenient points. Indeed, the examples supplied by The Disc Company show *Kindwords* doing just that and very good it looks too - especially when compared to other systems offering apparently similar facilities.

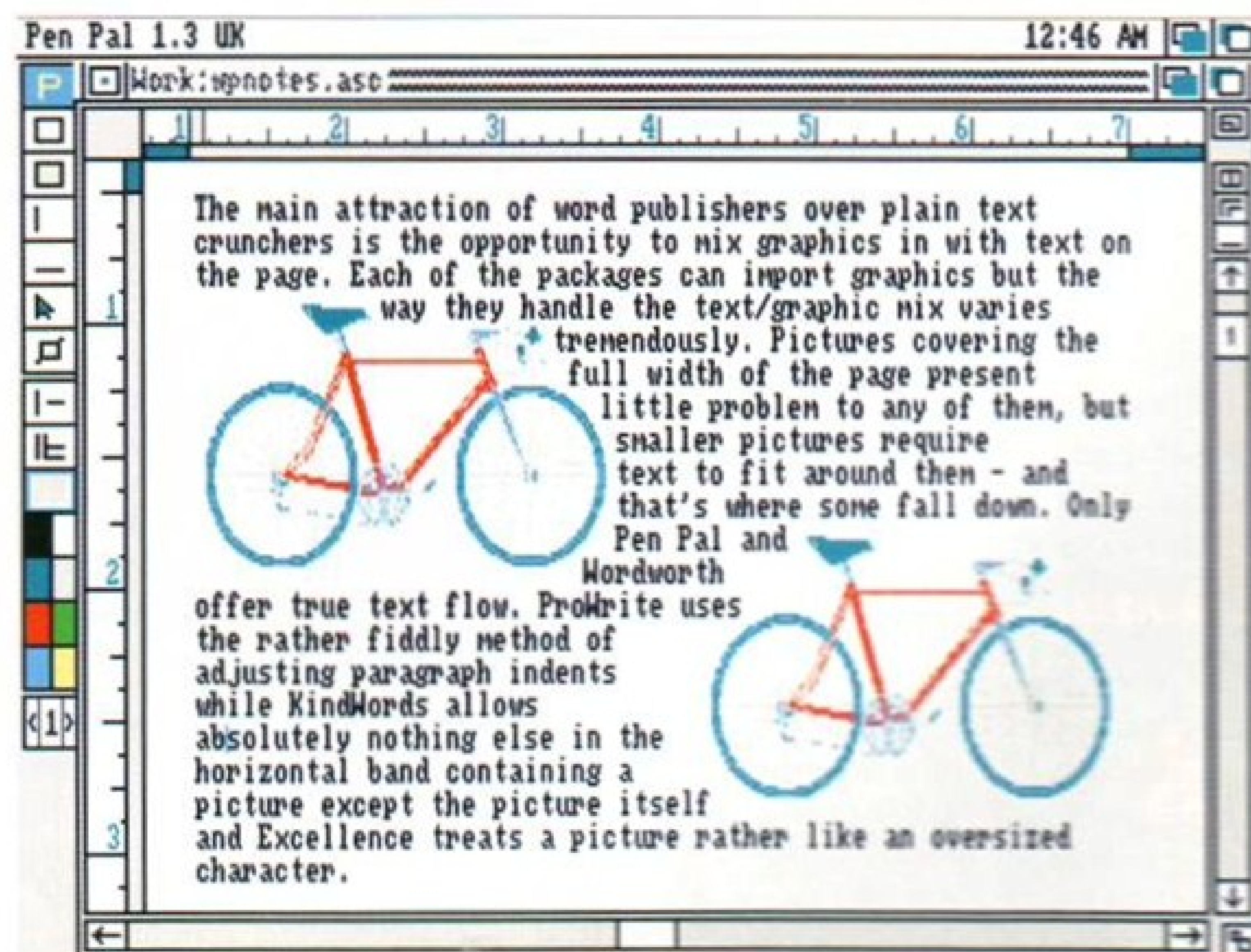
It's only when you start to look a little deeper that Kindwords' shaky nature becomes visibly apparent. For openers, when you try to move pictures around on screen you find that this is limited to horizontal shifts. Once placed, pictures cannot be moved to a new position on the page except by inserting or deleting text above or below the area. Not only that, but the display is something less than true WYSIWYG (What You See is What You Get) because *Kindwords* insists on adding extra vertical white space above and below the picture - creating a false impression of the true layout.

On the plus side though, resizing is simple and precise – selected graphics are surrounded by clearly-defined handles. Similarly, cropping affected independently from four sides is less of a nightmarish pursuit than in some of the other offerings. It also makes a trade-off between screen and image colours by allowing you to decide whether to use the image palette or the default colours. That said, little is gained when importing, say, a 32-colour picture into a 16-colour screen. At least the colours print correctly...









EXCELLENCE!

Coming from the Micro Systems Software stable, experienced users might well ponder if this one is worth bothering with. As it turns out, *Excellence!* is quite respectable package - except when it comes to graphics; although to be fair it is not sold as such. It is a much improved version of *Scribble!*. Importing images is simple, because it does not force the user to explicitly select graphics. Relying on the presence of an IFF image file header, it performs any necessary actions automatically. This facility is so friendly, it can be a little confusing, since pictures can be loaded as if they were documents. The standard window supports: two, four or eight colours which doesn't leave room for manoeuvre. Import reveals an informative progress message as the program tries to map the image colours correctly; but most cases, although images are always recognisable, a lot gets lost in the translation.

Flowing text around graphics is not possible. Every graphic on the page is treated as a large character with a font size equivalent to the pic's height. Text can appear either or both sides of the picture but it always sits on the image's baseline. Therefore, only one line can occupy the picture's entire vertical space.

Resizing works in the same proportion as the picture on screen so cropping is needed first to change proportions. This is where another problem occurs. According to the manual, pictures may be cropped by rubber-banding from any of the four corners. In practice was unable to crop from any corner except the bottom right. Moreover, mouse control generally seems clumsy and sluggish when working with graphics.

PROWRITE

The blurb on the packaging implies ProWrite can import graphics and wrap text around them with ease. The manual is more vague on that point. However, before that can be attacked, the first obstacle is it's ludicrous file selector. The system used requires you clicking through a list of volume names. We would accept this might work great on single disk machines, but add a couple of extra floppies and it becomes a real chore.

These problems are augmented when it comes to flowing text around images. All pictures are treated as screen objects, but unlike the better systems, it does not recognise the picture's boundaries - even *Excellence!* can manage that. The job of laying out paragraphs to suit the image is left entirely to the user; and that means fiddling with paragraph indents

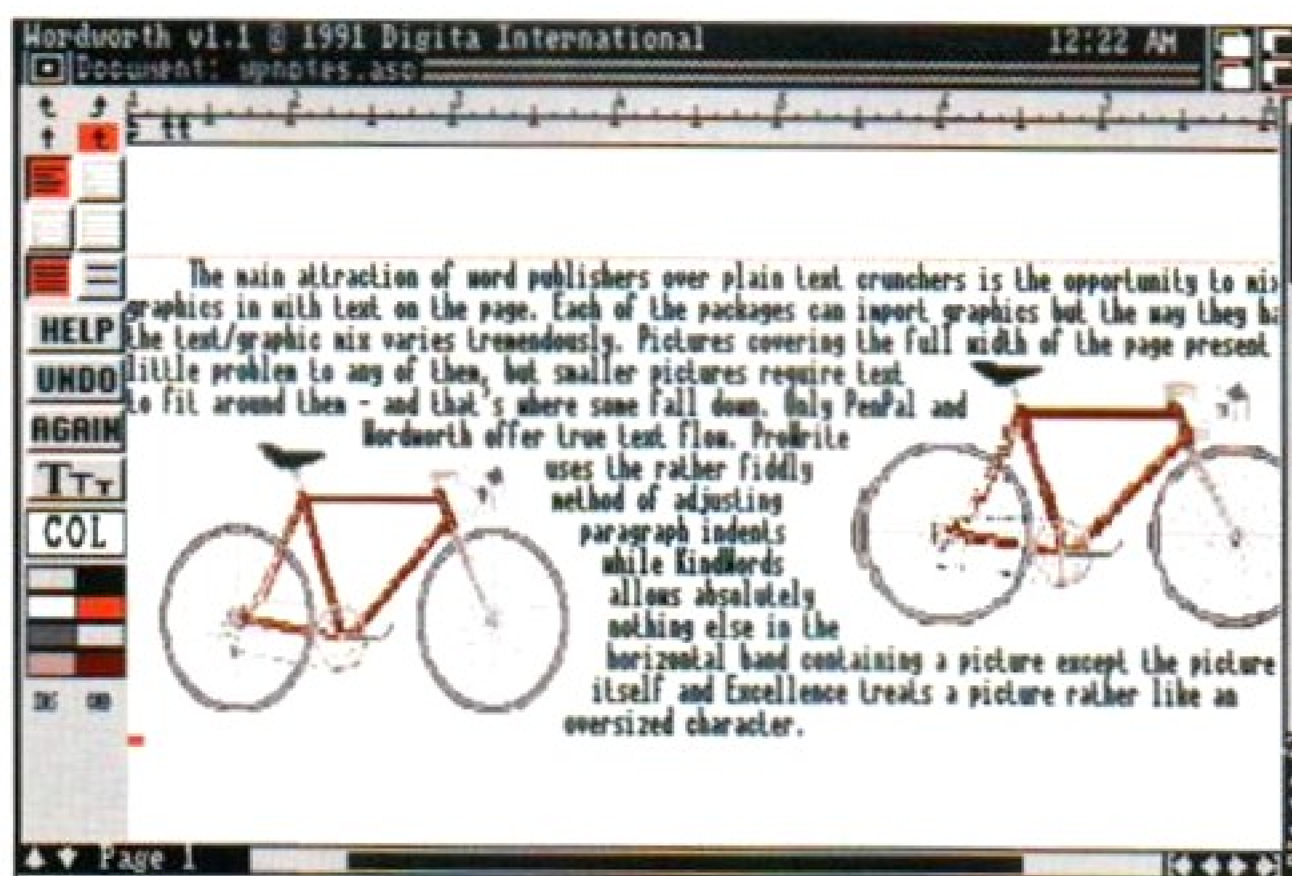
Things go downhill from there. The image's background colour (strictly, register 0) is always treated as being transparent. This distorts some images beyond recognition – although it can be used to good effect just as easily! Perhaps worst of all, ProWrite dithers images into the seven colours supported by the printer. No matter what the programmers claim this always ends up looking strange on screen - and no better on paper. Image scaling (resizing) is simpler than Excellence!, but image quality is lost. Make a simple scaling error and you have to start again. Also, like *WordWorth, ProWrite* does not support cropping - this is left for the user. *ProWrite's* single saving grace in this area is its ability to replace images with placeholders. These are boxes which indicate where the image will eventually live, but which do not interfere too much with text scrolling.

PEN PAL

Beginners find the interface easy to get to grips with, yet experts should find this program fast and powerful enough to support everyday needs. As far as graphics go, this package is probably the best allrounder of those reviewed here. Although considerably less powerful than *Wordworth,* it has a number of unusual features which are instantly appealing.

Basic graphics handling is a cinch: text can be repelled by images or made to flow round them effortlessly. And even though the text standoff (the distance between the image and the text) is fixed, this is unlikely to be troublesome to all but the most demanding experts. Nevertheless, special effects can be achieved by dropping images over text and letting the text show through the background. But the really clever feature is its ability to access images stored outside the document. This allows *Pen Pal* to display pictures in a mawkish eight-colour display, but print them in all their 4,096 colour glory. It also means precious RAM never gets filled with loads of undisplayed images leaving you more room to write text. On the down side this facility means you must store pictures along with the text - preferably on the same disk; a minor problem given the advantages. Interesting too, the version on test refused to import 64-colour "extra-half brite" (EHB) pictures.

If all those features do not give *Pen Pal* enough of a lead in themselves, especially considering it even contains a simple, object-oriented drawing package. This allows for the construction of simple line and box-shaped pictures; 3D effects on pictures; colourful text backdrops; highlights and so on. And because the objects can be 'locked' into place, they can become part of the program's database allowing the construction of simple forms.



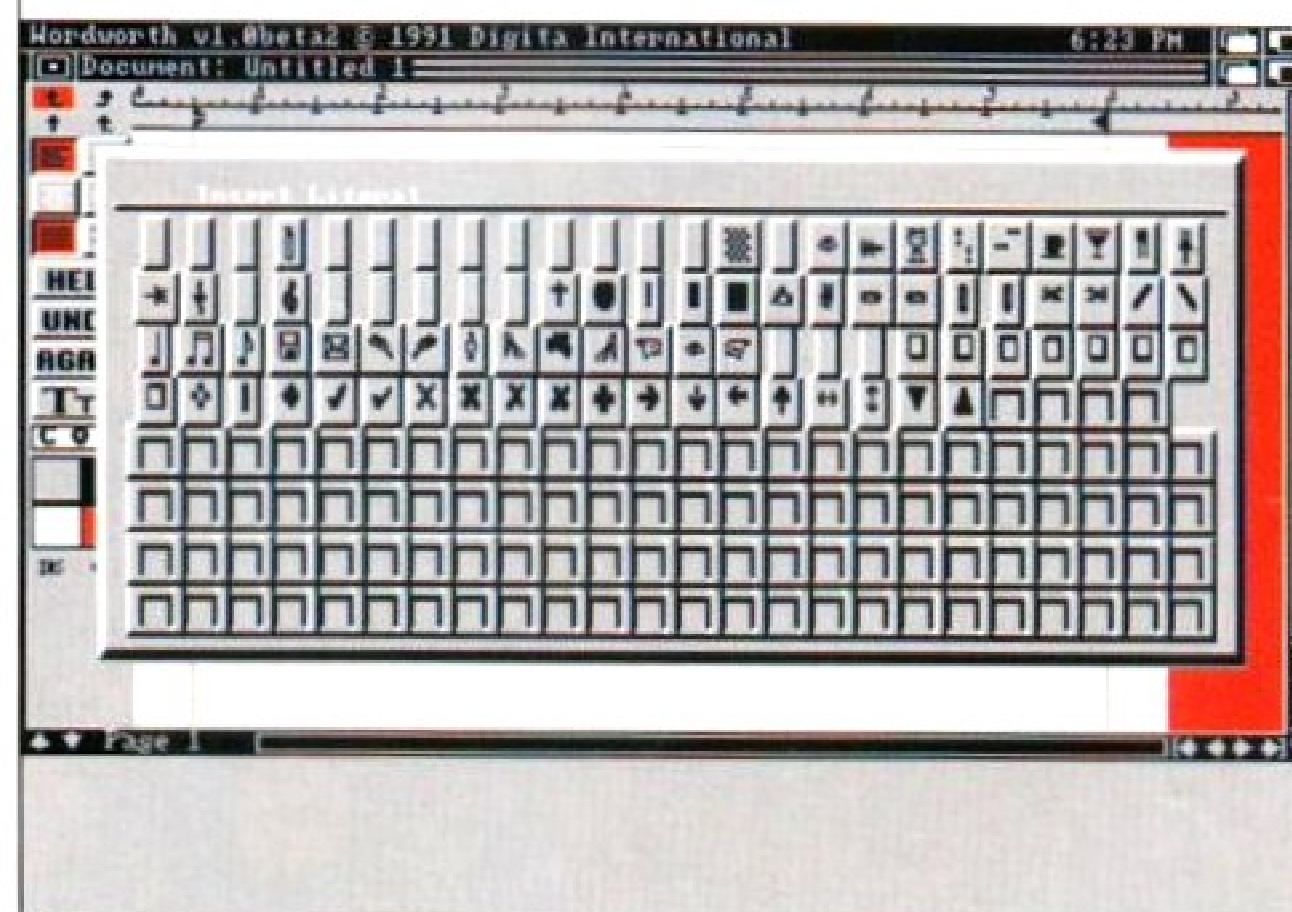
WORDWORTH

This is the latest and greatest jewel in Digita's crown - and one which they are very rightly enormously proud of. The company have previously been known for low-cost, yet extremely well-received systems, that are primarily aimed at the home and small business user, so this is something of a departure for them. At first glance it seems that *Wordworth* is little less than awe-inspiring. Indeed, beginners may initially feel it a little oppressive as it leaps from the screen like Hulk Hogan on a bad day. Nothing, though, could be further from the truth, with the singular exception of *Pen Pal, Wordworth* proved the simplest of the packages that we put on test.

Like *Pen Pal*, images have to be retrieved from a separate menu which presents probably the best and most comprehensive file requester box yet devised. When an appropriate picture is selected *Wordworth* asks what properties it should have. These are more or less identical to *Pen Pal* (repel text, flow text and see-through background) with additions so that you can adjust the text standoff and use the pictures palette. Using a 16-colour screen, *Wordworth* proved to be the only system capable of displaying a screen image in anything like its correct colours. Even a converted HAM image reduced to 16 colours without much loss in quality.

Unlike *Pen Pal* however, it stores images in RAM so that users with lots of memory will benefit greatly. Early versions suffered from 'low memory' problems even more because pictures were always processed in chip RAM - and most machines only have a maximum of 512K chip available. This feature has now been corrected, so if you have 9Mb, then *Wordworth* will quite happily make use of it.

Placing pictures into a document in *Wordworth* is a real breeze and is probably one of its best features. Once picked up, guides appear on both the horizontal and vertical rulers to help you place the image accurately. Nevertheless, a snap to grid option would have been greatly appreciated – perhaps Digita will include that option in the next release. Scaling is simple too, although *Pen Pal* once again has the advantage in that no detail is lost. When a scaled-down image is enlarged in Wordworth the loss of quality (pixelation) is very apparent.

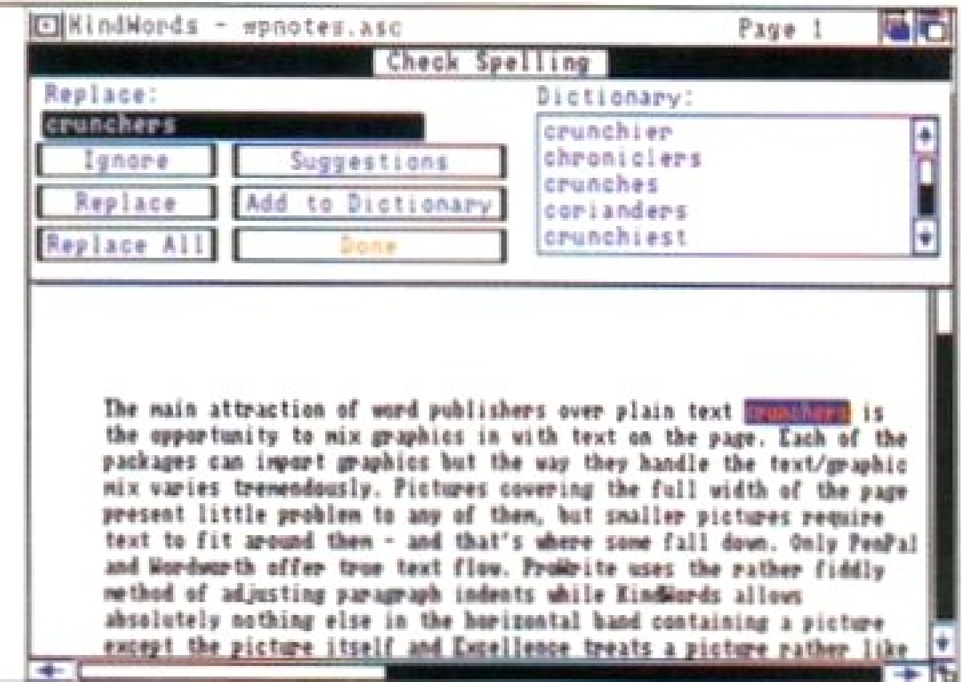


Writing

KINDWORDS

This is a pretty crude program by any standard. On the up side of course it has most of the simple layout facilities required, but on the down side it's seriously lacking in speed. As a writer's tool, *Kindwords* has a specification that should make it a real dream - in practice though it would be a nightmare would be a more appropriate analogy. Functionally the Collins-Proximity phonetic Dictionary and Thesaurus put it into the big league: vying for a place alongside *Wordworth.* The reality is far from it.

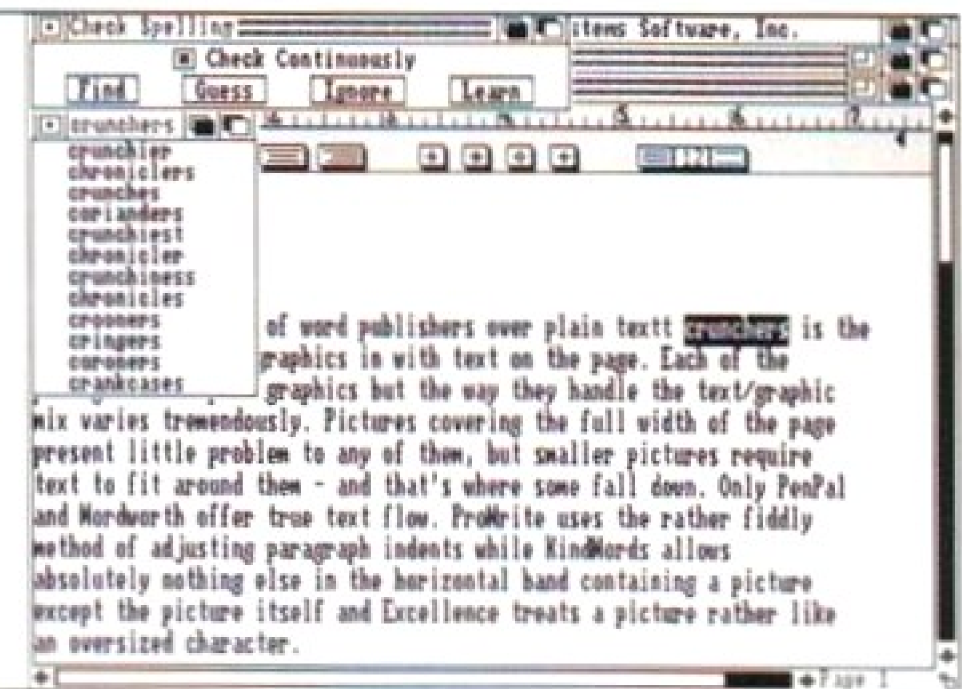
Even when in its fastest, four-colour mode, *Kindwords* really drags its heels. Strange as it might seem, a good typist is less likely to be affected by this than a bad one. The problem is not so much with entering in the text, but more when it comes to correcting and chopping it around later on. Worse still, though, it also has a rather nasty tendency to lock solid, or at least give the impression of doing so; precisely the sort of thing that will confuse and frighten a rank beginner.



EXCELLENCE!

As writers' tools go, *Excellence!* is everything that *Kindwords* isn't. On pure screen-update alone it consistently turned in the best timings, but there is more to it than that. It has the sort of features you might expect to find in a high-end word processor such as a massive spelling checker and an even bigger thesaurus - so they claim.

Beyond that though, the inclusion of a grammar checker is unique among these systems. In fact, if this article had been written on any of these systems, *Excellence!* would have easily been the logical choice for that reason alone. It is the writer's word publisher. Other features pushing *Excellence!* way ahead in this area include the word count: it's so handy to be able to check how much you've actually written, be it an assignment you're writing for college or text you are submitting for print. The readability index and VM feature are also valuable features. The latter allows large documents to be edited even with a mega-small amount of memory.

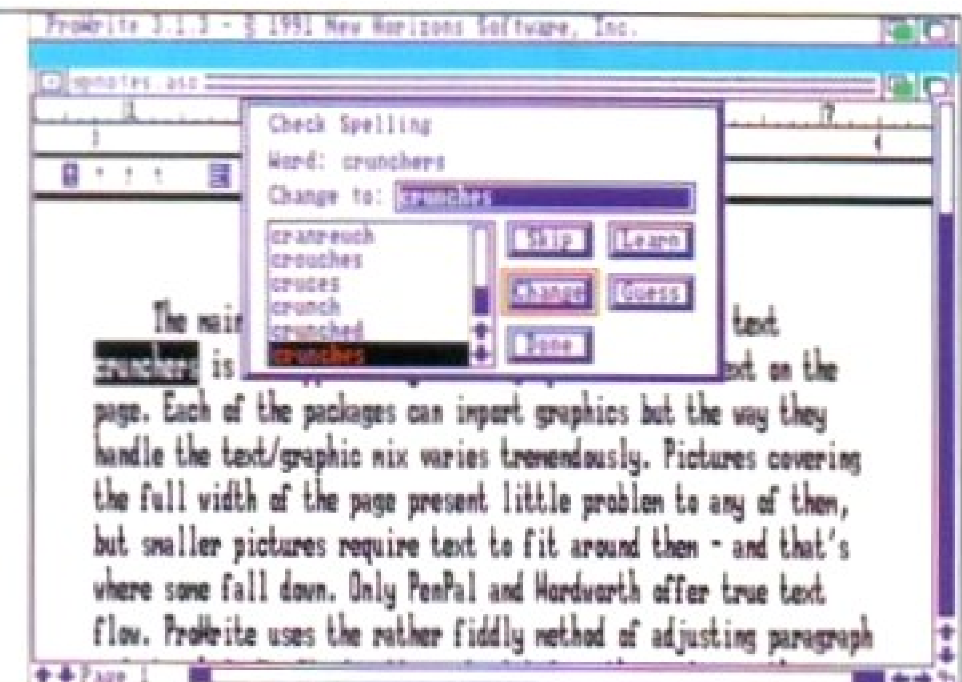


PROWRITE

Once again, *ProWrite* seems to be at right old disadvantage in this highly competitive area. As far as page-layout facilities go, there is little to chose between it and *Excellence!* although it does have the facility to show margin guides. This is particularly useful when you are laying out multiple, newspaper-style columns.

This one wins hands-down where Workbench 2 is concerned though. It is the only system that was under test (and the first third-party application) we have seen which supports features that are found in the new version of Workbench. When running on a WB2 machine, *ProWrite* puts an icon on the Workbench screen onto which the files can be dragged and then automatically loaded.

Finally it boasts extensive ARexx support (ARexx is what replaces AmigaBASIC in Workbench 2) so luckily programmers and all the new Amiga 500 Plus owners out there should really be in their element with this one.

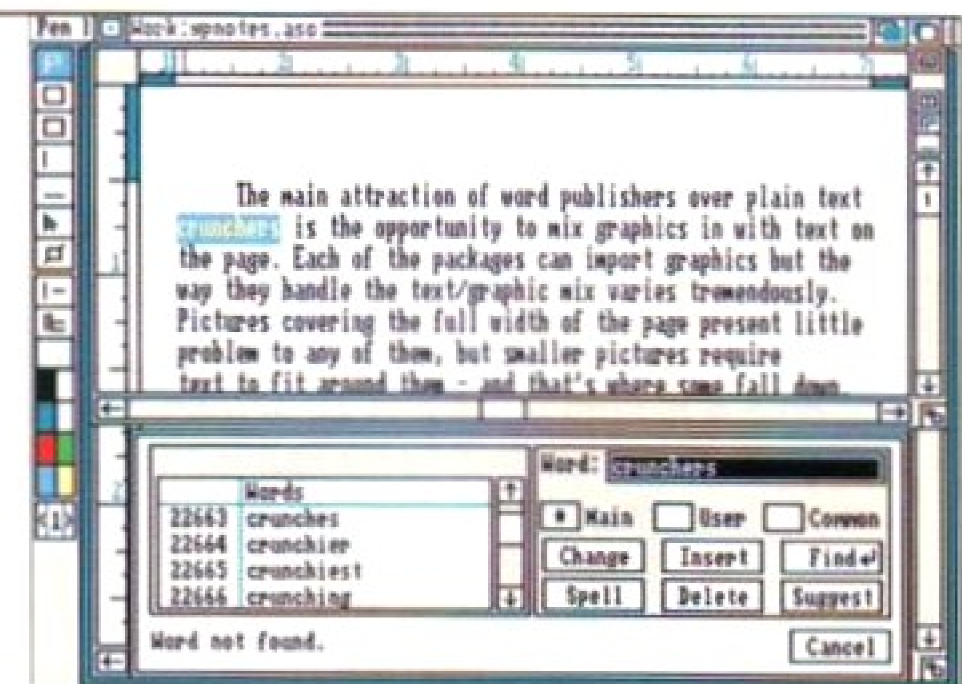


PEN PAL

As a writer's aid, it is quite adequate, although not exactly the bee's knees. Its major failing is its lack of a thesaurus, although Softwood would probably claim other features, such as the database, more than make up for that.

In the speed stakes it is probably quite fast enough for the average typist, although some will find it a mite sluggish and that you are leaving it somewhat behind as you batter away on the keyboard. Saying that, mouse tracking and block selection are of the highest calibre - noting at all like the hit-and-miss affair that we found in *Kindwords,* and to a lesser degree in *Wordworth* too.

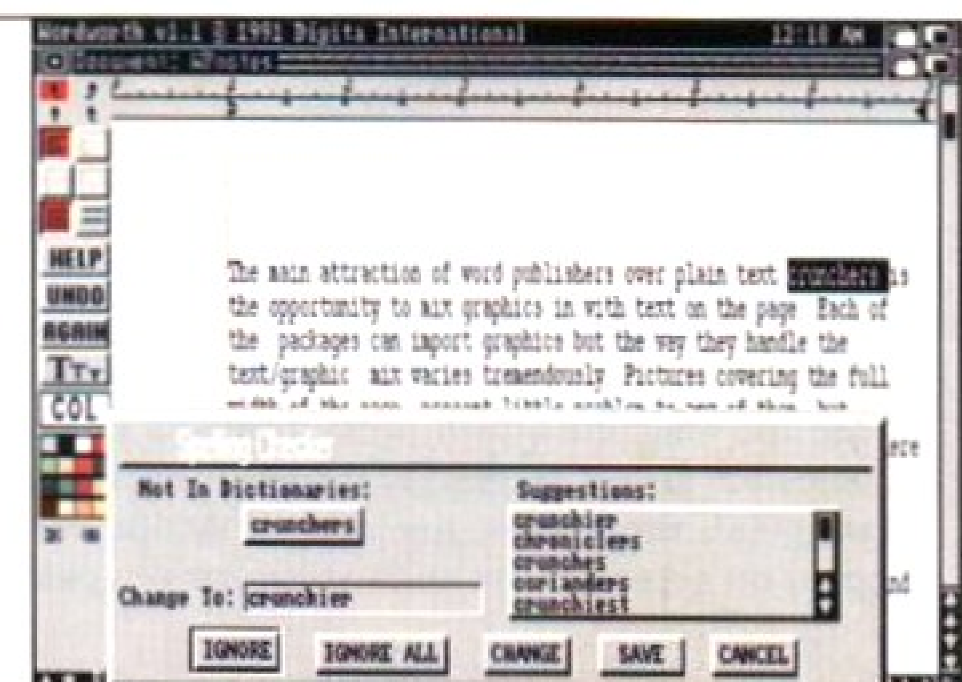
Page layout features are lacking in this one too, especially when you compare it to more deliberately dedicated packages like *ProWrite, Wordworth* and Excellence! Also, the omission of multiple-column support effectively kills any idea of a using it to produce a conventional, multi-column news-letter-style fanzine.



WORDWORTH

Digita claim that their word publisher is a 'writer's dream' - this is a very bold claim, but in truth it is not a very long way from reality. Much like *Kindwords, Wordworth's* utilities include the acclaimed Collins-Proximity Dictionary and Thesaurus but that's where the similarity ends. *Wordworth* is everything *Kindwords* should have been and isn't. It's user-friendly, easy to get to grips with and fairly stable most of the time.

Before *Wordworth* can really claim the accolade of 'a writer's dream' more work will have to be done on the seemingly tortuously-slow screen update. Although the program works well in two-colour mode, it looks better in at least four - and that's when things start to slow down. In this category at least there is little to choose between it and *Pen Pal*; nevertheless, *Excellence!* is still miles in front. If anything, *Wordworth* is too powerful for its own good. All to often the multitude of options actually get in the way and hinder the creative process!



Printing

KINDWORDS

There is very little that can be said about Kindwords that the example printout on this page does not already demonstrate. Taken directly from a Citizen Swift 9, this was produced using the program's own drivers. As to what went wrong, your guess is a good as ours, but this must surely be the final nail in *Kindwords'* coffin. Curiously enough, in an earlier test *Kindwords* was the only program to produce a printed output which matched the display - all the others stomped on the aspect ratio.

For those who simply cannot afford anything slicker, *Kindwords* does have the advantage of custom printer drivers which give an excellent rendition of the programs own limited range of styles. However, these will only work if the correct printer driver is installed and set in preferences. Epson users, for example, must use EpsonX (supplied with *Kindwords*) and not the more usual EpsonX[CBM_MPS-1250]. *Kindwords* is very slow accessing Superfonts disk, it's just a quirk of the system.



EXCELLENCE!

This is the only system reviewed capable of producing landscape oriented printouts on a dot-matrix printer. Though available in *Wordworth* it requires a Postscript print engine. Of the three systems supporting Postscript, *Excellence!* is the cheapest by a margin.

However, it is the only one to include Postscript screen fonts to afford accurate layout on the printed page. Even so, only four fonts are supported - less than the 35 or so on most laser printers. For the rest of us, these fonts can be used as standard bitmapped screen fonts. Just the printer type is retrieved from the Preferences. The print requester itself is not very attractive, but clear and easy to use. Rather than providing a myriad of confusing radio button options it toggles the settings in such a way as what you see, is what you get. For instance, the density adjustment displays the resolution in dots-per-inch of the driver - very useful for the beginner. Print quality is exactly the same as all the other systems, since they all share the same non-specific Amiga driver.

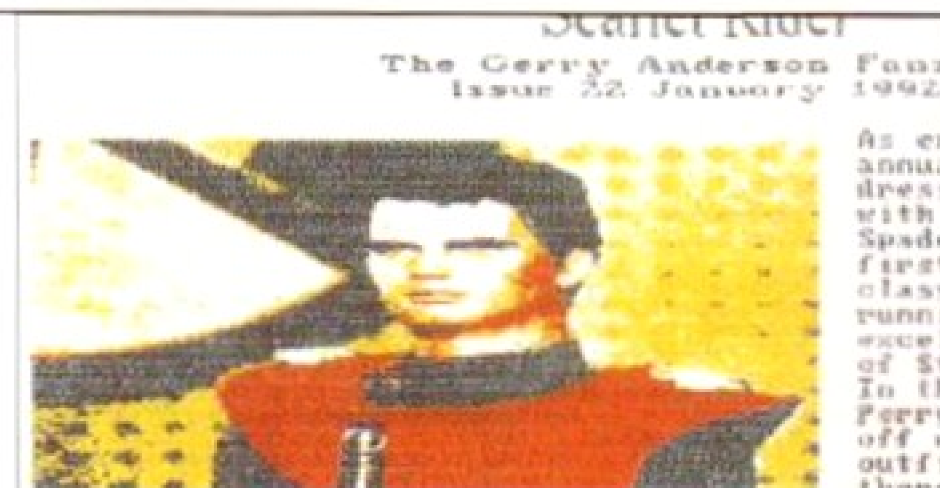


PROWRITE

This one proves to be a wild card yet again by providing the best paper-handling facilities of the bunch. *ProWrite* can collate pages, print them back to front and even separate the odd and even ones. Strangely though, the default setting is not to print pictures even in graphics mode.

Printer fonts are controlled by a number rather than by name – 10 in all; an option which seems more suited to Postscript than dot-matrix machines. However, as mentioned elsewhere, Postscript output is only available at some extra cost. The only information displayed from Preferences is the name of the printer driver in use. Any of the remaining options (and there's a lot of them) must be set manually with the Preferences tool.

The output quality is more or less the same as all the others for standard Amiga fonts; poor for colour graphics because of the dithering methods and eight colour screen employed.

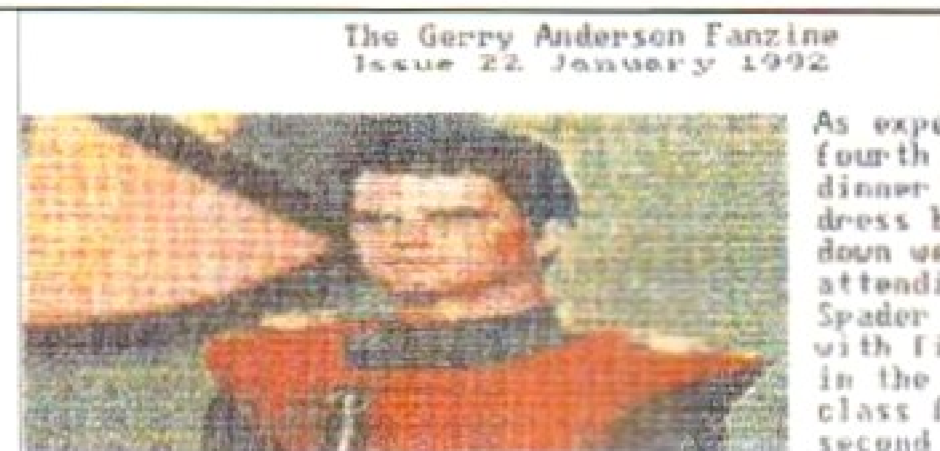


PEN PAL

When it comes to printing, *Pen Pal* stands out head and shoulders above the others. It cannot actually print to a postscript printer, but few people can afford one just for the home anyway so why bother?

Pen Pal has the unique ability to be able to scale and crop a picture while it is on screen, but manages to retain all the colour information when the time comes to commit it to hard copy (on paper). This means that you can load a 4,096 colour HAM picture, position it in the right place on your document and print it in all its glory. According to Softwood this is due to *Pen Pal*'s special 12-bit colour mode. Whatever the reason, it works.

Interestingly, however *Pen Pal* is the only system that takes note of Preference settings such as the density and the colour correction and makes them temporarily adjustable. It seems such a shame with all this power, that it can't manage to print graphics and printer fonts on the same page.



WORDWORTH

Wherever you look there are a lot of options. A great deal of thought has gone into designing a package which should suit everyone and the printing side of things is no exception. For instance, once *Wordworth* was configured for a Citizen Swift 9 it immediately made the machine's own fonts available in the list of typestyles. (They appear in black in the fonts list to distinguish them from the normal Amiga fonts and appear on screen in the nearest available typestyle.)

What's more impressive is *Wordworth's* ability to mix and match printer fonts with graphics, yet still retain a reasonable representation on screen. In many cases this is an advantage because the printer's internal fonts give better results and print faster. For typeface addicts, *Wordworth* also comes complete with its own serif and sans-serif styles, as well as a symbol font similar to Zapf Dingbats (useful symbols). Finally, for those lucky enough to own (or have access to) a Postscript printer, *Wordworth* can print on that too.





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Decisions

THE MAIN ATTRACTION of word publishers over plain text crunchers is the opportunity to mix graphics in with text on the page. Each of the programs covered here can import graphics, but the way they handle the text/graphic mix varies enormously. Pictures covering the full width of the page present you with little problem, more discrete pictures though require text to fit into spaces - and that's where the tin soldiers start to fall.

Only two of the packages that were tested, *Pen Pal* and *Wordworth*, actually offer automated text flow. *ProWrite* uses the rather fiddly method of having to adjust paragraph indents. *KindWords* allows absolutely nothing except a horizontal band containing a picture except the picture itself; and *Excellence!* treats a picture as though it were an oversized font character.

In so far as graphics handling is concerned this is more a less a two-horse race between Digita's *Wordworth* and *Pen Pal*; and the deciding factor between those two will probably be price. Since *Pen Pal* has a considerable edge in this department (being cheaper by almost a third) it will probably be the choice for most users. When it comes to writing though, the bias must be towards *Excellence!*, which gains a slight edge over nearest rival *Wordworth* by including a grammar checker and column support.

As far as beginners are concerned, we secured the services of four rank starters who could just about type with two fingers, a teenager, two ex-soldiers and a housewife. Their favourite was (predictably) *Pen Pal* since it offers a colourful friendly environment at the expense of a standard Intuition interface. Coming in a close second was *Wordworth*. Despite our own feelings that the multitude of complex requesters and options would be off-putting, they quickly got used to the environment and were producing reasonably presentable documents within a few hours.

Honourable mentions went to *ProWrite* and *Excellence!* but overall, our beginners found *Wordworth*: "the best" and *Pen Pal* "Easiest to use". As for *Kindwords*, "We couldn't find a kind word to say about it." Sums it up really.

MARK SMIDDY
and PAT WINSTANLEY

	Pen Pal	Kindwords	Excellence!	ProWrite	Wordworth
Graphics:	●●●● Easy-to-use drawing tools; makes intelligent use of RAM and disk.	● Import is OK, text/graphics mix is non-existent	● Marginally better than Kindwords - but much more reliable.	● Appalling import quality and second-rate flow capability.	●●●●● Accurate conversion of all screen formats…
Printing:	●●● Excellent. Pictures appear in full colour.	●● Superfonts provide good output; graphics are OK (sometimes).	●● Nothing flash at this end. Quality is quite standard.	● No better than the others and Postscript is an extra.	●●●●● …which can be mixed with NLQ printer fonts.
Writing:	●●● Transparent - logical controls are unobtrusive.	● Urrrghn.	●●●●● Excellent - far and away the best engine of the bunch.	●● Average and usable - but not outstanding.	●●● A bit finicky when using a mixture of fonts.
Speed:	●●● Average for what it does - spelling checker could be better.	● Slooooow.	●●●● Fastest and most stable system tested.	●●● Nothing great just average.	●●● Slow screen handling but otherwise acceptable.
Documentation:	●●●●● Well illustrated and easy to follow.	● Blink and you'll miss it, almost non-existent	●●●● Very well presented, but sometimes a little cloudy.	●●● Pretty basic stuff. ARexx and WB2 support.	●●● Looks good but difficult to find information quickly.
Integration:	●●●●● It has its own database - enough said?	● Crude.	●●● Basic mail-merge facility supports Organise! files.	●●●●● Better than most with	●●●● Merges directly with mailshot plus, Superbase and custom format
Features:	●●●● Lack of thesaurus is a real shame	● Very few of note - apart from the dictionary and thesaurus.	●●●● Let down by poor graphics handling.	●●●● Snaking columns give it a slight edge over Excellence!.	●●●●● Too numerous to mention!
Value:	●●●●● Still the best value for money system	● Avoid this at all costs.	●●● A bit too close to Wordworth to merit extra stars.	●● Far too expensive for what amounts to a very average system.	●●●●● Expensive - but you get what you pay for.
Verdict:	95%	30%	80%	65%	92%

KINDWORDS £51.03
EXCELLENCE £117.44
PROWRITE 3 £143.00
HB Marketing, Unit 3, Poyle 14
Newlands Drive. Colnbrook
Slough, SL3 0DX 0753 686000

PEN PAL £79.95
Gordon Harwood Computers, New Street
Alfreton, Derby, DE5 7BP 0773 836781

WORDWORTH 1.1 £129.99
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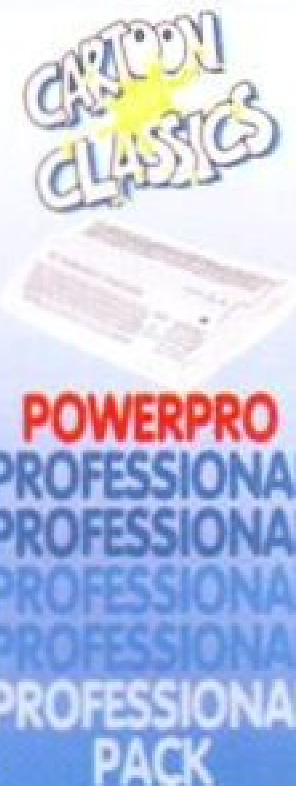
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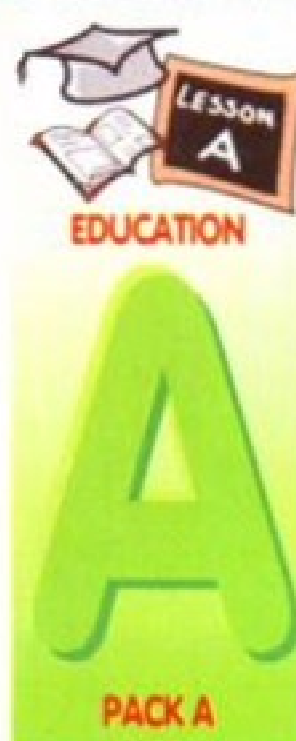
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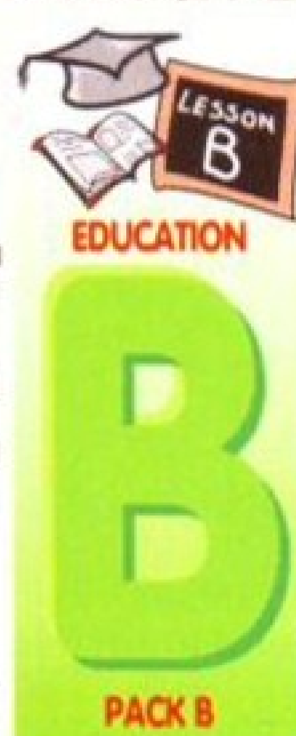
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ON CD DISKS NOW AVAILABLE, THERE ARE EDUCATIONAL PACKAGES, ENCYCLOPAEDIAS PACKED WITH REFERENCE INFORMATION, STUNNING GAMES, MUSIC SYSTEMS AND MANY OTHER NEW AND VARIED SUBJECTS, INCLUDING WHOLE WORLD ATLASES OR EVEN THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SHAKESPEARE, EACH ON ONE CD DISK!!! **CDTV - NOTHING LESS THAN REVOLUTIONARY**

FREE CDTV STARTER PACK!!!

WHEN YOU CHOOSE YOUR CDTV FROM GORDON HARWOOD, NOT ONLY DO YOU GET OUR LEGENDARY SERVICE, BUT WE GIVE YOU A CDTV STARTER PACK, TO GET YOU EXPLORING YOUR NEW WORLD - STRAIGHTAWAY. THIS INCLUDES A SUPERB SELECTION OF CD DISK TITLES INCLUDING THE WELCOME TUTORIAL & HUTCHINSONS ENCYCLOPAEDIA, PLUS ... FIVE GAMES, SHERLOCK HOLMES & THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES, SIM CITY, A TOWN WITH NO NAME, CHAOS IN ANDROMEDA, AND THE ACCLAIMED LEMMINGS, WORTH IN TOTAL ALMOST £200.00. IN ADDITION IS THE INFRARED REMOTE CONTROLLER, AND ALL THE HARDWARE NEEDED TO GET YOU CONNECTED.

ALL THIS FOR JUST £599.95

CDTV IS THE SAME SIZE AND STYLE AS MOST VIDEO RECORDERS, SO IT CAN SIT UNOBTRUSIVELY ABOVE OR BELOW YOUR HOME TV AND/OR HI-FI. AND WITH ITS INFRARED REMOTE CONTROLLER, IT CAN BE OPERATED FROM YOUR ARMCHAIR. BUT PERHAPS MOST IMPORTANTLY, IF YOU ARE A COMPUTER ENTHUSIAST, REMEMBER THAT INSIDE EVERY CDTV, IS AN AMIGA, JUST WAITING TO BE USED. SO LATER ON, YOU'LL BE ABLE TO BUY THE OPTIONAL KEYBOARD AND DISK DRIVE, TO GET INTO THE WORLD OF AMIGA COMPUTING. PRINTERS, DIGITISERS, GENLOCKS AND OTHER ACCESSORIES,CAN ALL BE CONNECTED TO GIVE ACCESS TO MANY OTHER EXCITING FACILITIES, AND ALSO MANY OF THE EXISTING SOFTWARE PACKAGES AVAILABLE FOR THE AMIGA COMPUTER. NEVER BEFORE HAS THERE BEEN SO MUCH POTENTIAL FROM ONE NEW STUNNING SYSTEM, PACKED WITH

TODAYS TECHNOLOGY.!

CALL IN AND SEE US FOR YOUR PERSONAL DEMONSTRATION, OR PHONE US FOR YOUR FREE DETAILED CDTV INFORMATION PACK.

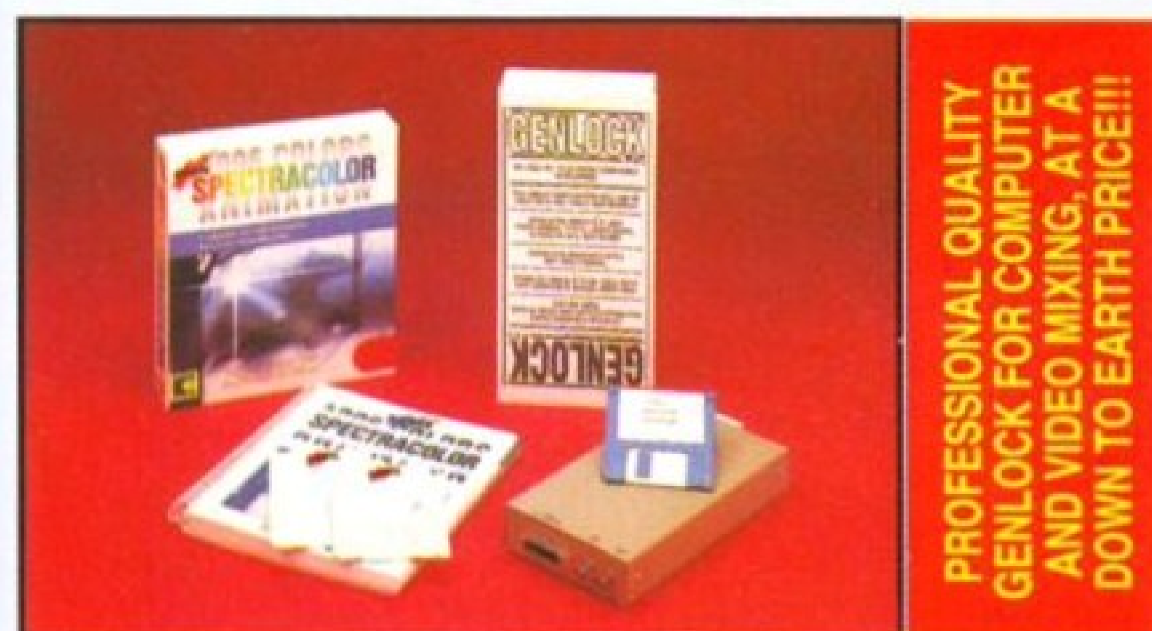
CDTV ACCESSORIES

DUE TO BE RELEASED SOON - Please call us for latest availability.

CD 1220 KEYBOARD	AN 89 KEY QWERTY KEYBOARD	£49.95
CD 1252 MOUSE	INFRARED MOUSE WITH BATTERY SAVER.	£49.95
CD 1200 TRACKBALL	INFRARED TRACKBALL, WITH THE OPTION OF DIRECT CONNECTION TO EXTEND BATTERY LIFE. DUPLICATES FUNCTIONS OF TWO BUTTON MOUSE AND INCLUDES TWO 9 PIN PORTS FOR STANDARD JOYSTICKS	£79.95
CD 1400 CADDY	FOR HOLDING CD WITHIN DRIVE	£9.95
CD 1401 MEMORY CARD	PERSONAL RAM CARD CONTAINING 64K OF MEMORY FOR STORING DATA OR AS A BOOKMARK FACILITY WITHIN CDTV	£79.95
CD 1405 MEMORY CARD	A LARGER PERSONAL RAM CARD CONTAINING 512K OF MEMORY FOR STORING DATA OR AS A BOOKMARK FACILITY WITHIN CDTV	£249.95
CD 1800 FLOPPY DRIVE	RACK MOUNTABLE FLOPPY DRIVE WITH 880K CAPACITY. CASING ALLOWS ROOM FOR ADDITIONAL HARD DRIVES OR MODEMS ETC.	£99.95
CD 1301 GENLOCK	PAL BASED VIDEO INTERFACE CARD FOR SUPERIMPOSING CDTV IMAGES OVER A VIDEO SIGNAL PROVIDED BY ANY STANDARD VIDEO SOURCE	£149.95
CD 1321 VIDEO CARD	PAL BASED VIDEO INTERFACE CARD TO ALLOW CONNECTION TO TV'S /VIDEOS REQUIRING UHF, S-VIDEO OR COMPOSITE INPUTS.	£TBC

Many Amiga Accessories & Peripherals (e.g. Printers, Disk Drives, Software etc.) are compatible with CDTV. Please phone us for compatability information.

HARWOODS AMIGA PRO-GEN



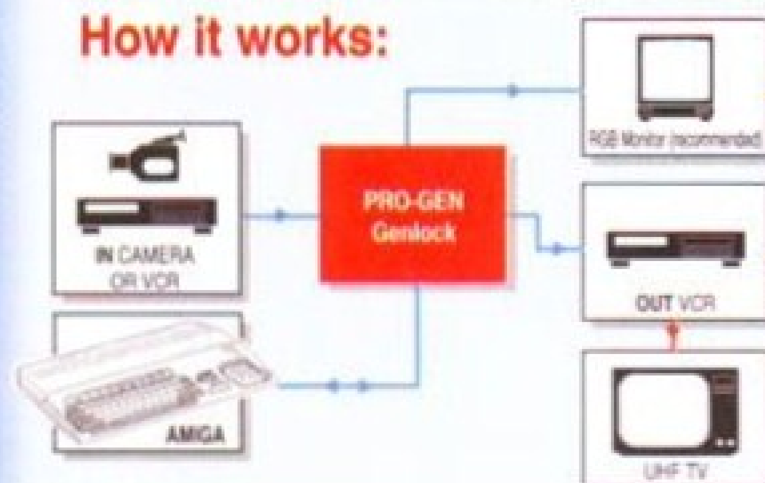
PRO-GEN Amiga Genlock

The Pro-gen AMIGA Genlock allows you to mix your Amiga display with any PAL video signal whether it is from a VCR, Laserdisk player or a Camcorder. In fact any item of video equipment which outputs a PAL composite video signal.Combined with the Amiga computer the Pro-Gen gives you the facilities of a special effects & video titling suite. Take your own films & give them a professional look by OVERLAYING TITLES or by SUPER IMPOSING YOUR OWN GRAPHICS created in packages like Spectracolor or Deluxe Paint. Pro-Gen is supplied with Oxxi's Spectra-color paint & animation package.

FREE

In Spectracolor every drawing tool and animation control is at your finger tips - over 50 tools in the fast menu Toolkit, plus point and click access to all 4096 colours, with independent right and left mouse button colours & modes. Add automatic animation generation easy mouse controls for all functions, and the ability to paint with multi-page animated brushes, and you've got a powerful tool for artistic expression. With animation controls this easy it's simple to put your ideas into motion. Forget co-ordinate systems and reference numbers just move objects with the mouse in this intuitive and friendly graphical environment. Spectracolor supports both ANIM & IFF file formats, and all the video modes of the Amiga, including HAM! (Spectracolor requires min. 1Mb. memory)

How it works:



STOP PRESS

PRO-GEN... NOW INCLUDES A VERY VERSATILE MULTI COMPONENT VIDEO TO GENLOCK CONNECTING CABLE KIT. THIS ALLOWS PRO-GEN TO BE USED STRAIGHTAWAY WITH MOST POPULAR VIDEO EQUIPMENT, WITHOUT THE NEED TO HUNT DOWN THE CORRECT CONNECTING CABLES. THIS KIT CAN ALSO BE USED TO CONNECT IN OTHER WAYS... eg. VCR TO VCR etc.
A KIT TO START YOU OFF RIGHT FROM THE MOMENT YOU OPEN THE BOX!!!

PRO-GEN & Spectracolor ONLY £129.95

Mode Switch-box for Genlocks

Features Include
- Compatible With The Pro-Gen And Rendale 8802
- Supplied With Genlock Extender Cable Worth £9.95
- Switch-box Switches Between Foreground, Background, Video And Computer Modes.

£29.95

**Finance terms are available (subject to status) for most products: please see our ordering panel at the end of this advert for full details*

AMIGA STORAGE DEVICES

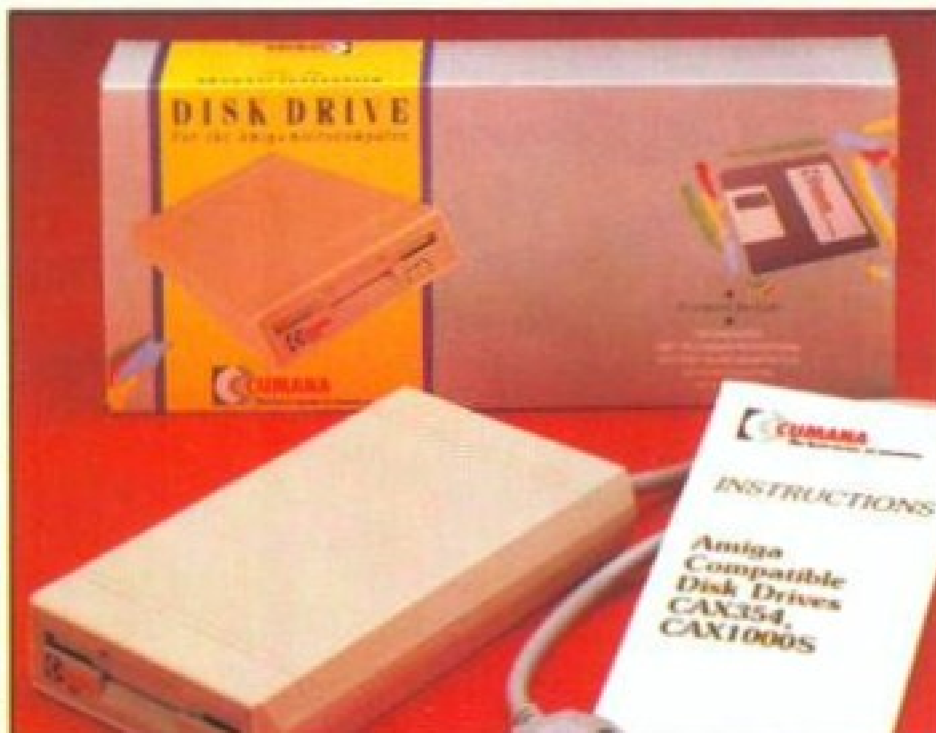
Commodore A590 20Mb HD

Features Include
- ☆ Connects to sidecar bus on left hand side of Amiga A500
- ☆ Autoboots with Kickstart 1.3
- ☆ Sockets For Up to 2 Mb of RAM
- ☆ DMA Access
- ☆ External SCSI Port
- ☆ Complete With Power Supply

A590 Hard Disk Including 512K RAM Only **£299.95**

A590 Hard Disk Including 1 Mb. RAM Only **£319.95**

A590 Hard Disk Including 2 Mb. RAM Only **£349.95**



Cumana CAX354 3.5" External 2nd Disk Drive.

- ☆ Features Include
- ☆ Long connecting cable
- ☆ 1Mb, (880K Formatted) Capacity
- ☆ Enable/Disable Switch,
- ☆ Throughport
- ☆ Access Light
- ☆ Compatible with Amiga 500/1000/1500/2000/3000 and CDTV

£57.95

SUPRA 500XP 52-105Mb HARD DISK DRIVE WITH MEMORY EXPANSION UP TO 8Mb.

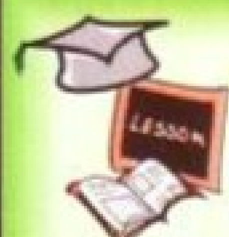
Features Include:
- ☆ Capacities of 52/80/105Mb available
- ☆ Connects to sidecar bus on L/H side of Amiga A500
- ☆ Autoboots with Kickstart 1.3, boot enable/disable switch
- ☆ Sockets for up to 8 Mb of FASTRAM with enable/disable switch
- ☆ Autoboots With Kickstart 1.3
- ☆ SCSI Port & Amiga bus pass thru allows other devices to be connected
- ☆ Includes Express Copy hard drive Back-up Software
- ☆ The 52 Mb version powered by your Amiga (High Current Power Supply is only optional). *High Current Power Supply is required for 80Mb. and 105 Mb versions.

Only... **£49.95**

SUPRA PRICES

RAM SIZE	STORAGE CAPACITY 52Mb.	80Mb.	105Mb.
1Mb.	£479.95	*£539.95	*£629.95
2Mb.	£499.95	*£569.95	*£649.95
4Mb.	£699.95	*£749.95	*£849.95
8Mb.	£899.95	*949.95	*1049.95

Please don't forget to add the cost of Power Supply when calculating price of 80/105Mb. drives



EDUCATION SOFTWARE

DON'T JUST PLAY GAMES WHEN YOU CAN LEARN WITH YOUR AMIGA TOO!

- **PRIMARY MATHS COURSE** - Ages 3 to 12, Complete 24 Programme Course. **£21.95**
- **BETTER MATHS** - Ages 12 to 16, Higher level to Linear & Quadratic Equations. **£21.95**
- **MICRO MATHS** - 24 easy to use programs for GCSE ('O' Level) revision or self tuition **£21.95**
- **MEGA MATHS** - A 9 level step by step tuition course. For mature beginners, 'A' Level studies & Micro Maths users **£21.95**
- **MICRO FRENCH** - GCSE French tuition or revision course. Covers both spoken & written French **£21.95**
- **MICRO ENGLISH** - A complete programe of self-tuition up to GCSE standard **£21.95**
- **THE THREE BEARS** - Ages 5 -10, Develops imaginative thought/reading skills. **£22.95**
- **SPELL BOOK** - Ages 4 to 6, Developed with the help of a Primary School Head Teacher to aid spelling skills. **£17.95**
- **PLAY AND READ** - Ages 4 to 9, The complete reading tutor. Part 2 teaches spelling to the beginner at reading. **£18.95**

AMIGA PERIPHERAL PACKS

TWO GREAT PACKAGES THAT SAVE YOU MORE MONEY!

These two packs are aimed at the user who needs to get a great deal from his Amiga. A superb quality monitor, the PHILIPS CM8833/II has been put with your choice of either the CITIZEN SWIFT9 or the CITIZEN SWIFT 24 printer. You choose, but whichever combination you have the price has been designed to SAVE YOU MONEY. Buying together will save you £££'s!

PERIPHERAL PACK 1-CM8833/II + Citizen Swift 9

Only... **£469.95** With a FREE PEN PAL worth £79.95

PERIPHERAL PACK 2 -CM8833 + Citizen Swift 24E

Only... **£569.95** With a FREE PEN PAL worth £79.95

AMIGA SOFTWARE

Music-X: The ultimate software for professional MIDI sequencing. The software includes a configurable librarian and a synthesiser patch editor. All you need to recreate a song can be recalled from one performance file including sequences, MIDI routing, sync setup, keyboard maps & synthesiser or drum machine patch libraries. **NEW LOW PRICES - £54.95 or just £74.95 with midi-interface!**

MIDI INTERFACE (5 Port): In, Out, Through plus 2 switchable thru'/out. Includes cable. **£24.95**

AMOS: AMOS allows you to access the power of the Amiga with ease. 500 different commands make AMOS a sophisticated development language. The AMOS animation language allows you to create complex animation sequences. 300 page manual and over 80 example programs **£49.95**

Amos Add on Modules: (BOTH require Amos prog.)
Amos Compiler   Amos 3D
BUY ALL THREE AMOS PROGRAMS FOR JUST **£89.95**

SuperBase 4: Most powerful database available for the Amiga. Combines the ease of use of Super-Base 2 with a versatile programming language so that you can tailor your data to your own specific needs for club/business/library records etc. **£229.95**

Lattice C: An ideal tool for the C programmer whether experienced or a novice. The best way to create applications for the Amiga. Fully supports Motorola chipset. Nearly 300 functions optimised to help the user write the tightest possible code. Includes screen editor. Most Amiga C books are based around lattice. (Requires either 2 floppy drives OR a hard disk drive) **£199.95**

Deluxe Paint IV: Latest version of the Amigas first, and still the best, paint and animation package, now including HAM mode. (1 Mb. minimum memory or more recommended) **£79.95**

Vidi, The Complete Colour Solution: Vidi with RGB Splitter, Frame Grabber & Digitiser. Grabs moving colour video into 16 grey scale frames (up to 16 frames in 1Mb. Amiga) and digitises from still colour video source in up to 4096 colours in less than 1 second! Requires home VCR or video camera for grabbing. Requires video camera or VCR with perfect pause for digitising. Now comes with Spectracolor FREE!!! **£179.95**

MASTERSOUND: High quality "mono" sampler (best for sampling instruments etc.) **£36.95**

Pen Pal V.1.3

WORD PROCESSOR/DATABASE

With Pen Pal you can mix text, 4096 colour graphics & data in ways no other w/p can! "It's handling of graphics is unsurpassed: Pen Pal is the only word processor I tested that will automatically wrap text round graphics.. **Amiga World, July '90**



£79.95

PEN PAL Vers 1.3 WITH 512K Amiga RAM Expansion only...£99.95!

THE ABOVE IS JUST A SMALL SAMPLE FROM OUR EXTENSIVE RANGE OF THOUSANDS OF SERIOUS, EDUCATION AND RECREATION TITLES. WE CAN'T LIST THEM ALL HERE SO PLEASE CALL US IF YOU CAN'T SEE THE PROGRAM YOU REQUIRE, IT'S PROBABLY IN STOCK!

If you're thinking about presents why not buy a Harwoods Gift Voucher (all values available).





Enquiries & Order Line: **0773 836781**

Finance Facilities Available*

Please phone us for information and your personal application pack.



GORDON HARWOOD HARWOOD HARWOOD Computers

ALFRETON DERBYSHIRE

The Closer you look, The Better we look.

**Finance terms are available (subject to status) for most products: please see our ordering panel at the end of this advert for full details*

FREE... Fully Tailored Dust Cover with all Dot Matrix Printers

PRINTERS

NEW LOWER PRICES!!!

All printers in our range include the following standard features...

☆ Standard Centronics parallel port unless otherwise stated for direct connection to Amiga, PC's, ST etc. and come with a:

☆ FREE CONNECTOR LEAD & A FREE TAILORED DUST COVER!



When you are comparing our prices to others make sure that the same essential items are included eg. Printer Lead, Dust Cover, Postage and VAT etc.

CITIZEN 120D+ 9 PIN MONO - Up to 120/25 cps — £149.95
- Very reliable low cost printer with interchangable interfaces for Centronics/RS232/serial type (C64 etc.)
- Full 2 Year manufacturers warranty

NEW FASTER STAR LC20 9 PIN MONO - Up to 150/38 cps — £159.95
Replacement for our most popular Mono Dot-Matrix at a super low price
- Multiple font options easily accessible from front panel
- Excellent paper handling facilities
- Simultaneous, continuous and single sheet stationery
- 240 x 240 dpi Graphics

CITIZEN 124D 24 PIN MONO - 120/40 cps — £199.95
- 360 dpi - 24 Pin MONO with 3 Fonts
- 8K Buffer - Expandable to 32K
- 3 Fonts, Superb letter quality
- Full 2 Year Warranty
- Feed for labels & multi-part stationery
- Complete paper parking facilities.

STAR LC 24/10 24 PIN MONO - 150/50 cps — £214.95
24 Pin version of the Star LC Series with
- Exceptional letter print quality
- 360 x 360 dpi Graphics
- Additional font cartridges available
- 8 resident fonts

STAR LC200 9 PIN COLOUR PRINTER - 185/40 cps — £209.95
This is the one in our packs!
- 80 Column Dot Matrix
- 240 dpi - 9 Pin COLOUR
- 16K Buffer, 8 Resident Fonts
- Push/pull tractor & rear/bottom feeds
- Reverse paper feeds
- Micro paper feed, Max. paper width 11.7"
- Supplied with colour & mono ribbons
- Paper park with auto single sheet loading
- Programmable from front panel.
- 12 month warranty

CITIZEN SWIFT 9 PIN COLOUR - 160/40cps — £219.95
New super high spec 9Pin colour printer
- 8K Buffer 4 Fonts
- Push and pull tractor built-in
- Feed for labels/multi part stationery
- 240 x 240 dpi Colour Graphics
- Best text quality in our 9Pin range
- 2 Year Citizen warranty

STAR LC24/200 24 PIN MONO - 220/55 cps — £249.95
New Star 24 pin that means business!
- 80 Column Dot Matrix
- 360 dpi - 24 Pin MONO
- 7K Buffer expandable to 39K
- 10 Resident Fonts
- Front Panel Pitch Selection
- Push/pull tractor & rear/bottom feeds
- Reverse paper feed
- Paper park with auto single sheet loading
- Micro paper feed, Max. paper width 11.7"
- Supplied with mono ribbon
- Faster than the old LC24-10
- Extra font cartridges available
- Program from front panel, No DIP switches
- 12 month warranty

STAR LC24/200 24 PIN COLOUR - 220/55 cps — £299.95
Colour version of the LC24-200 Mono but with expandable 30K Buffer.

NEW 24 Pin CITIZEN 224 COLOUR - 160/53 cps — £259.95
Brand New, lowest cost colour 24 Pin printer, anywhere!
- 80 Column Dot Matrix with 4 Fonts
- 360 dpi - 24 Pin COLOUR
- 8K Buffer expandable to 32K
- Easy to use front panel controls
- Push & pull tractor feeds
- Complete paper parking facilities.
- Supplied with mono & colour ribbons
- Full 2 Year Citizen Warranty

NEW 24 Pin CITIZEN SWIFT 24E COLOUR - 180/60 cps — £319.95
Brand New, superb specification colour 24 Pin printer.
- 80 Column Dot Matrix with 7 Fonts
- 360 dpi - 24 Pin COLOUR
- 8K Buffer expandable to 32K
- Easy to use LCD panel controls
- Push/pull & bottom tractor feeds
- Complete paper parking facilities.
- Supplied with mono & colour ribbons
- Full 2 Year Citizen Warranty

CITIZEN SWIFT 24 PIN COLOUR - 160/50 cps — Phone for very special prices!
The ever popular "European Printer of the Year 1990", fully featured 24 Pin colour printer which of course comes with Citizens 2 Year Warranty.

NEW FASTER STAR XB 24 PIN COLOUR RANGE XB24-200 & XB24-250 - 275/80 cps — £399.95 24-200 Colour — Wide Carriage £499.95 24-250 Colour
These NEW top of the range Stars replace the XB24/10 & XB24/15, & offer the best possible quality dot matrix printing
- Exceptional print quality
- 4 x 48Pin super letter quality fonts
- 14 x 24Pin near letter quality fonts
- Buffer: 29K(XB24/200) & 76K (XB 24/250)
- 360 x 360 dpi Colour Graphics
- 12mths on-site warranty (UK Mainland)

HEWLETT PACKARD PAINTJET COLOUR A4 INKJET — £899.95
Our best quality full colour printer at a realistic price
- Parallel/Centronics or Serial RS232 I/F (specify with order, MAC option available)
- For presentation graphics/DTP, CAD and technical/scientific applications
- A full page of colour graphics in 4 minutes (typical)
- Non impact printing, virtually silent, 43dba
- Will print transparencies
- 12 Months on-site warranty (UK Mainland)

STAR LASERPRINTER 4 - 4ppm MONO LASER — New! £749.95
A4 Laser Printer, will connect to PC, Amiga, Atari ST etc.
- 300 DPI, 1Mb. Upgradable to 5Mb.
- Emulations inc: HP Series II, Epson EX800, IBM Proprinter & Diablo 630
- Serial & Parallel Interfaces
- 12month on site warranty (UK Mainland)
- Every desktop publishers dream

STARSCRIPT - 4ppm POSTSCRIPT COMPATIBLE LASER — New! £1099.95
A4 Laser Printer, will connect to PC, Amiga, Atari ST & Apple Macintosh
- As the LASERPRINTER 4 but with Starscript and 2Mb Memory, 49 Fonts and Appletalk.

SEE OUR LIST OF ACCESSORIES FOR BOTH STAR AND CITIZEN PRINTERS, ALL AT COMPETITIVE PRICES!

All the characters Per Second speeds quoted above are Draft/LQ at 10cpi

PRINTER ACCESSORIES

CITIZEN PRINTER ACCESSORIES:

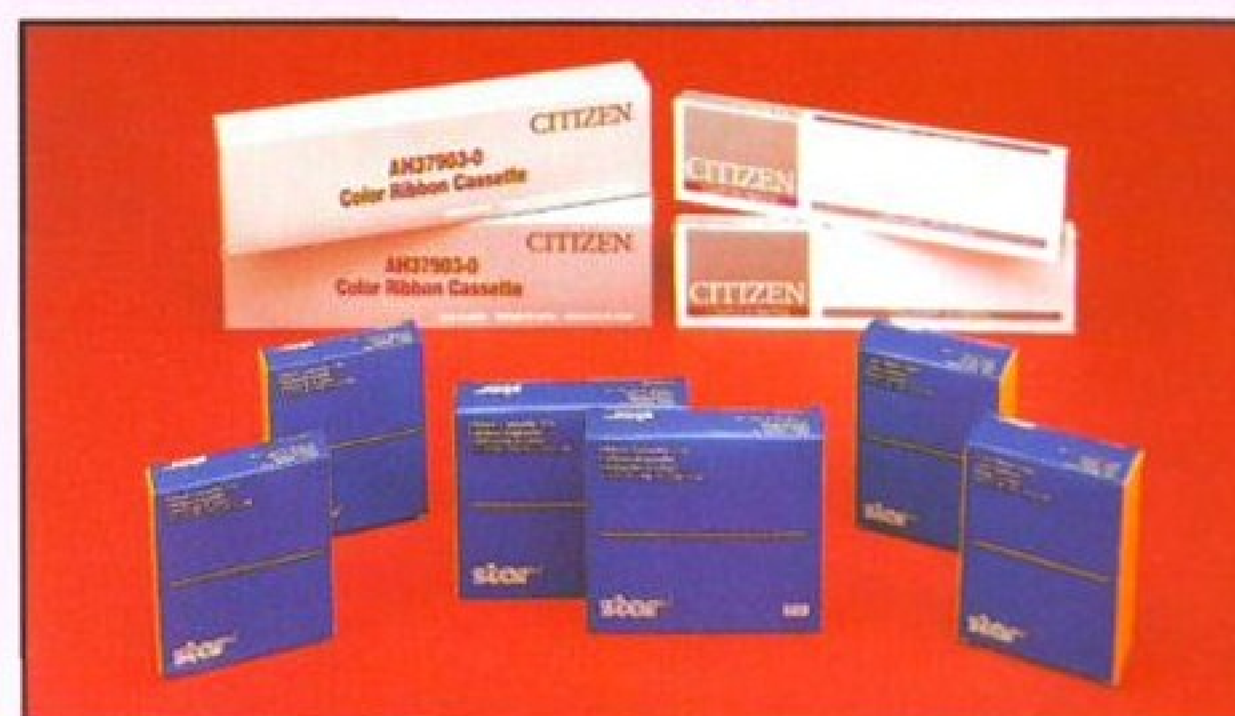
Citizen 120D+ Sheet Feeder	£69.95
Citizen 120D+ Parallel Interface	£49.95
Citizen 120D+ CBM C64 Serial Interface	£49.95
Citizen 124D 32K Buffer	£13.95
Citizen 124D Semi-Auto SheetFeeder	£39.95
Citizen 124D Automatic Sheet Feeder	£79.95
Citizen 124D Printer Stand	£24.95
Citizen Swift 9 Semi-Auto SheetFeeder	£39.95
Citizen Swift 9 Automatic Sheet Feeder	£79.95
Citizen Swift 9 Printer Stand	£24.95
Citizen Swift 9X Printer Stand	£34.95
Citizen Swift 9X Automatic Sheet Feeder	£139.95
Citizen Swift 24 32K Printer Buffer	£13.95
Citizen Swift 24 Semi-Auto Sheet Feeder	£39.95
Citizen Swift 24 Automatic Sheet Feeder	£79.95
Citizen Swift 24 Printer Stand	£24.95
Citizen Swift 24X Auto Sheet Feeder	£139.95
Citizen Swift 24X Printer Stand	£34.95

HEWLETT PACKARD PAINTJET PRINTER ACCESSORIES:

Hewlett Packard PaintJet	
Black Ink cartridge	£25.95
Colour Ink Cartridge	£31.49
Single Sheet Printer Paper	£17.95
Z-Fold Printer Paper	£15.95
Transparency Paper: Pack of 50 Sheets	£52.95

STAR PRINTER ACCESSORIES:

Star LC-20 Mono Printer	
Automatic SheetFeeder	£74.95
Star LC24-10 Mono Printer	
32K Buffer £67.95	£67.95
Automatic SheetFeeder	£74.95
Star LC-200 Colour Printer	
Automatic SheetFeeder	£74.95
Star LC 24-200 Mono Printer	
32K Printer Buffer	£34.95
Automatic SheetFeeder	£74.95
Star LC 24-200 Colour Printer	
32K Printer Buffer	£34.95
Automatic SheetFeeder	£34.95
Star XB 24-200 Colour Printer	
Pull Tractor	£34.95
Font Cartridges - Styles To Be Announced	£29.95
128K Centronics Printer Buffer	£89.95
Automatic SheetFeeder	£114.95
Dual Bin SheetFeeder	£429.95
Star XB 24-250 Colour Printer	
Pull Tractor	£34.95
Font Cartridges - Styles To Be Announced	£29.95
128K Centronics Printer Buffer	£89.95
Automatic SheetFeeder	£174.95
Dual Bin SheetFeeder	£469.95

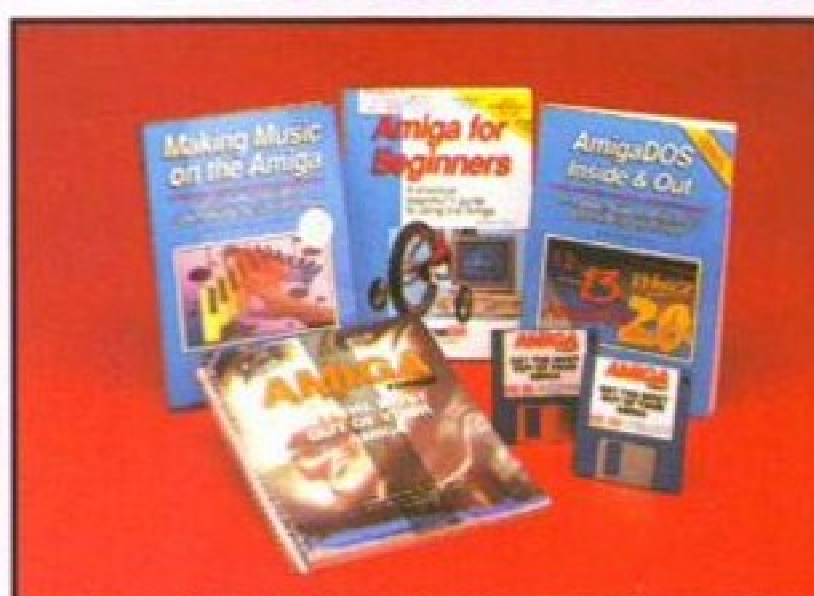


GENUINE CITIZEN & STAR REPLACEMENT PRINTER RIBBONS

PRINTER	PRINTER TYPE	BLACK RIBBON	BLACK RIBBON 'SIX PACK'	COLOUR RIBBON	COLOUR RIBBON 'SIX PACK'
CITIZEN 120D+	BLACK ONLY	£4.95	£24.95	N/A	N/A
CITIZEN 124	BLACK ONLY	£4.95	£24.95	N/A	N/A
CITIZEN SWIFT 9	BLACK/COLOUR	£4.95	£24.95	£16.95	£99.95
SWIFT 24/24E/224	BLACK/COLOUR	£4.95	£24.95	£16.95	£99.95
STAR LC10/20	BLACK/COLOUR	£4.95	£24.95	£6.90	£36.50
STAR LC200	BLACK/COLOUR	£6.95 ZX9	£36.95 ZX9	£12.95 ZX9CL	£69.95 ZX9CL
STAR LC24/200	BLACK/COLOUR	£8.95 Z24	£49.95 Z24	£14.95 X24CL	£74.95 X24CL
STAR XB RANGE	BLACK/COLOUR	£8.95 Z24	£49.95 Z24	£14.95 X24CL	£74.95 X24CL

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WE ALWAYS CARRY LARGE STOCKS OF THE FULL RANGE OF ABACUS & OTHER BOOKS...Phone us for details!

AMIGA FOR BEGINNERS - VOL. 1 ABACUS BOOKS, — £12.95
From unpacking your Amiga to creating your own icons, includes first use of basic and extras disk.

AMIGA BASIC INSIDE AND OUT - VOL 2 ABACUS BOOKS, — £18.95
Definitive step by step guide to programming Amiga's in basic.

AMIGA MACHINE LANGUAGE - VOL 4 ABACUS BOOKS, — £14.95
Practical guide to learning 68000 assembler language.

AMIGA DOS INSIDE AND OUT - VOL 8 ABACUS BOOKS, — £18.45
Guide to Amiga DOS & CLI. NEW Edition inc. DOS v 2.0

AMIGA HARDWARE REFERENCE MANUAL-Addison Wesley, — £21.95
Written by technical experts at Commodore Amiga Inc, USA... People who designed your Amiga. Hardware level machine code programming at advanced level.

AMIGA, BEST OF TRICKS & TIPS Vol. 17, — £32.95
A complete set of tricks and tips that enable you to do MORE with your Amiga and as simply as possible.

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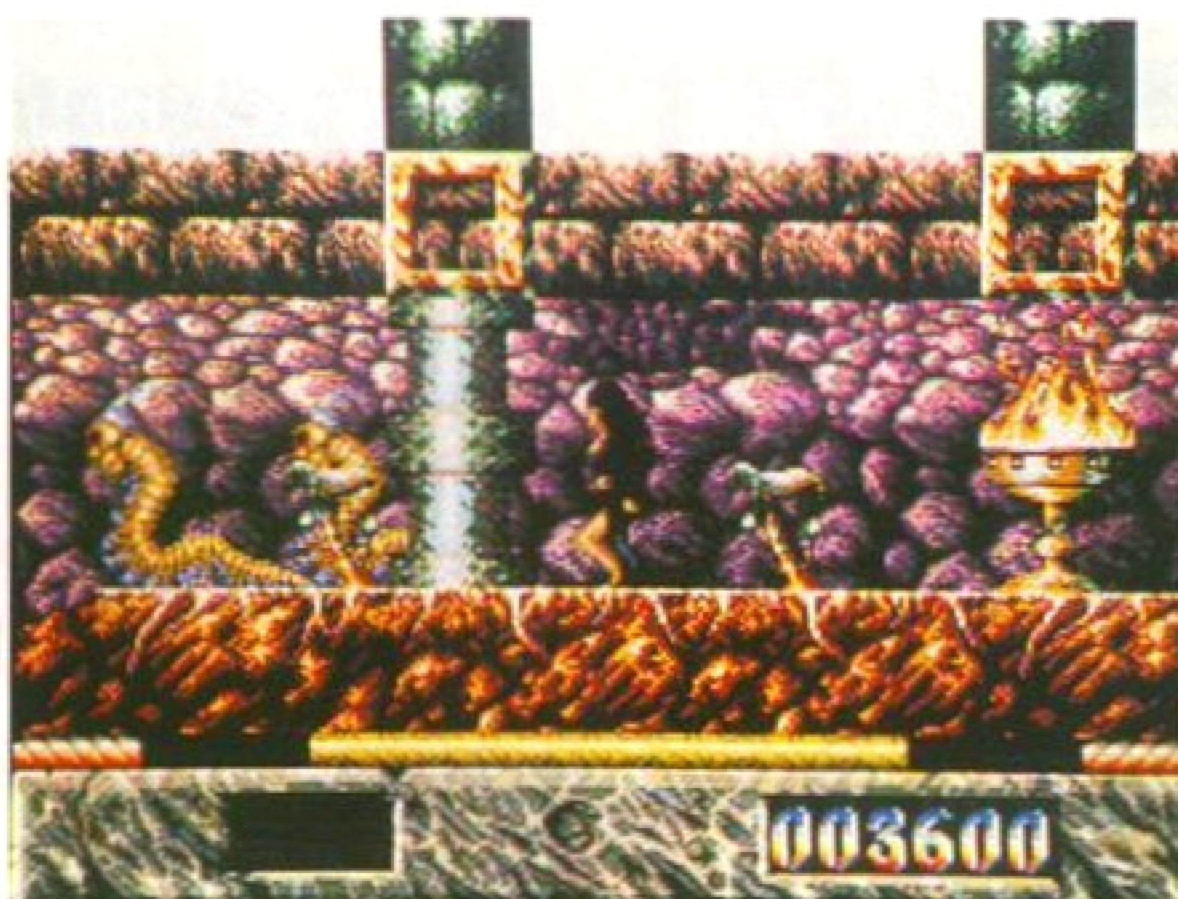
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Coming Attractions

The heat is on to get the big Christmas releases up and running for the yule-tide rush, here's a hit-list of what's going to be out and when.

Elvira – The Arcade Adventure

Publisher **Flair**
Release **December 1991**



Why is Elvira famous? She hasn't done much mainstream TV and she's only released one movie – and most people only hired it to find out why she was famous. Despite this, the lady is to get a second Amiga game based on her – this time in a leaping-and-shooting platform adventure.

Flair, the team who are putting the ladies tale onto disk, have studied the genre and turned what could be a straightforward exploitative licence into highly promising arcade bash. Elvira has to wander a three world set up collecting spells so that she can access the inner reaches of a castle. The spells she collects have to be traded on route, but the real edge will no doubt be the puzzles. Many routes will only open after sets of conditions have been met: carrying the right spell, having killed certain beasts and approaching the blockage from a specific route. *Elvira* will be in for full review next month, maybe then we'll find out why she's famous.

Knightmare

Publisher **Mindscape**
Release **Late November 1991**



The TV show's stunning effects have made it a massive hit and the cunning coding of Tony Crowther threatens to bring the game equal success. Using a souped-up *Captive* (*AF*16 91per cent) engine to drive the game, it takes the same first-person perspective for the dungeon romp. Unlike *Captive*, *Knightmare* will feature more puzzles than combat which will probably suit the system better than ever before. A clue to the toughness came from one of Mindscape's developers who's been testing the game: one particularly tricky puzzle took Mr Crowther two hours to resolve, and he'd designed it!



Gremlin have taken up the winners' rostrum with Nigel 'oh-dear-my-car blew-up-10-metres-from-the-finishing-line' Mansell.

Nigel Mansell, the man with the moustache, is back and this time he's brought his car. Yes, he's once again ventured into the world of licensed games by signing with Gremlin. There was quite a tussle for the man's monicker, but it seems that Gremlin's recent race history clinched the deal. The game's due out in early 1992.



Bub and Bob will be back in Parasol Stars. Have Ocean got the perfect formula? Bubble Bobble + Rainbow Islands = Parasol Stars!

Rainbow Islands 2 (*Bubble Bobble 3*!) is on the way. The new game, entitled *Parasol Stars*, takes *Rainbow Islands*-style sprites into *Bubble Bobble*-style mazes. Ocean are currently showing off a three level demo of the game – which will be released in Spring 1992 – and they seem to have gathered the best features from both worlds.



Top Banana gets converted but keeps its brilliant silly title.

Cross format conversions are not unusual. When they come from the Archimedes though, they're something to shout about. *Top Banana* is the title (and what a title!) and it should hit the streets any day soon. It's all about saving the planet, nothing is wasted; the packaging is made of recycled card and the sprites are edible! Well it says so on the box.

Continued overleaf



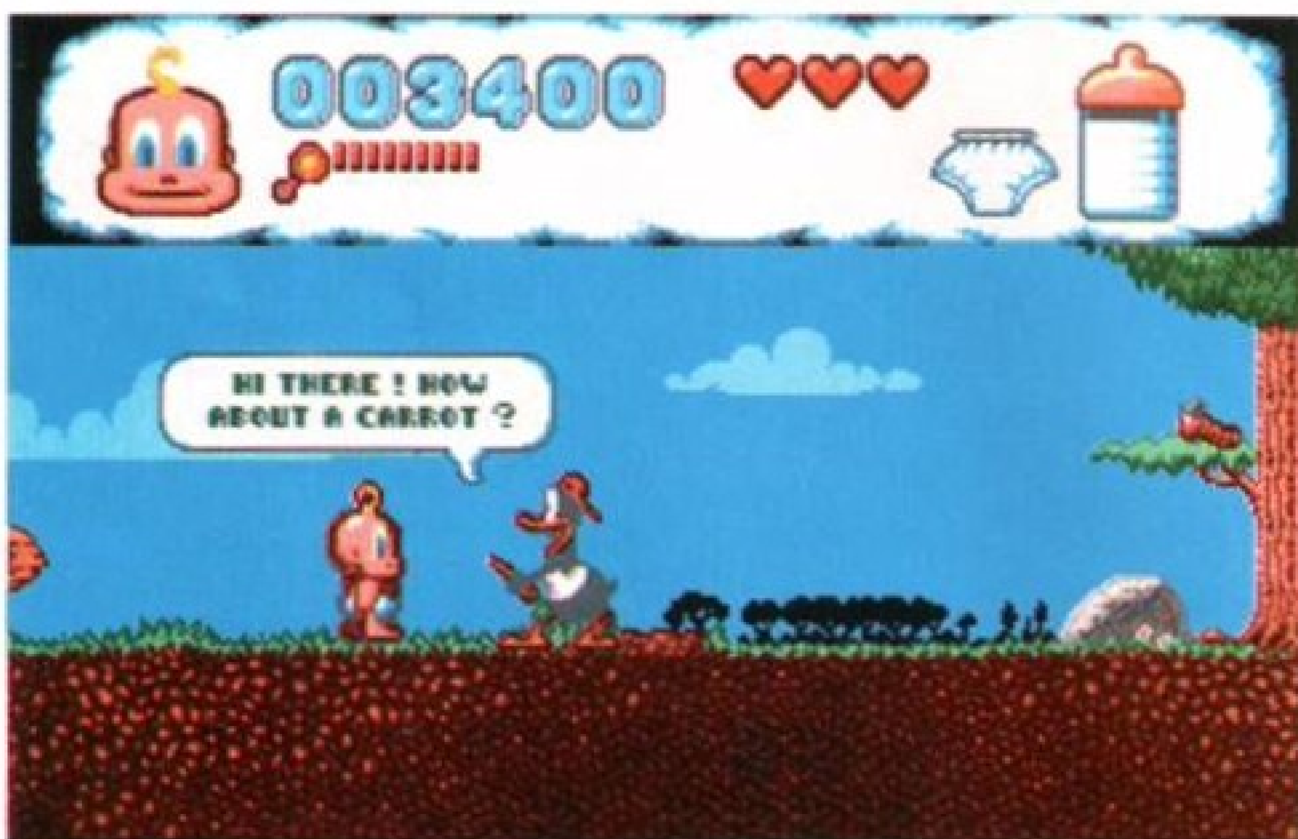
The Bit Bros shy away from platforms for the Chaos Engine an over-the-top scroller shooter.

The Bitmaps may have another winner on the way with: *The Chaos Engine.* So far only screen shots are available, but they look spiffy. But if the Bit Bros want to discover the secret of *Chaos* they should take a look at the *Amiga Format* office.



Once upon a time, in a galaxy far, far away, a game called Epic was started. It should land here early next year.

Epic appears to have been a bad choice of title for Ocean's monstrously large space sim. They had originally hoped to release it this summer, but now it isn't expected for release until early 1992. If the finished game can match the demo then the wait should be well worth it.



Baby Jo from Loriciel is a realistic platform romp! How many other games are there that involve nappy changing?

Loriciel have really upped their presence on the game scene this month by announcing a whole batch of imminent releases. The pick of the crop looks as though it's going to be *Baby Jo*, a console baby-bash – this promises to be ultra cute, this little devil even soils his nappy if he eats too many bonus sweets.



Prince of Persia beware, the Golden Eagle is after your animation crown!

Return of the Golden Eagle is another teaser that Loriciel are showing off at the moment. It's the latest game by the team who put *Panza Kick Boxing* together. It may even out animate *Prince of Persia*. Each move was videoed five times and the best series chosen! It won't be released for a while, but it looks real smooth.

Previews update

Chinto's Revenge – Millennium: Release to be rescheduled.
Mad TV – Rainbow Arts Reviewed next month.
Dragon Fighter Idea – Do dragon's really exist?
Final Blow Storm – Seconds out! Review next month.

Monkey Island 2: LeChuck's Revenge

Publisher **LucasArts/US Gold**
Release **Early 1992**



The new improved *Monkey Island* features some familiar faces: such as Stan the boat salesman, plus new difficulty settings. This will not only determine how tough a puzzle is to solve, but also the actual puzzle is like. If you replay the game on the same level it should lead to a different set of tasks. The real reason for the sequel is best explained by designer Ron Gilbert: "We just couldn't fit all the jokes into *Monkey Island 1*!".

Smash TV

Publisher **Ocean**
Release **Christmas 1991**



The Williams' coin-op classic *Robotron* gets a 1991-style outing with classy graphics, stupendous sound and addictive gameplay in the form of *Smash TV*. The conversion should be good because it's being handled by arcade specialist ZZKJ. The deadly gameshow sim will run with a four-way joystick adaptors replicating the original machine.

Ultima VI

Publisher **Mindscape/Origin**
Release **Late 1991/Early 1992**



Ultima VI is the best looking and biggest Britannia romp so far. The perspective has shifted from the overhead view to a slight slant, creating a more realistic look. The enhanced realism levels of the design also insist that characters sleep, eat and need light if they want to see anything at night. The game code is written, but Mindscape are tightening it for quick loading and great gameplay.

Wizkid

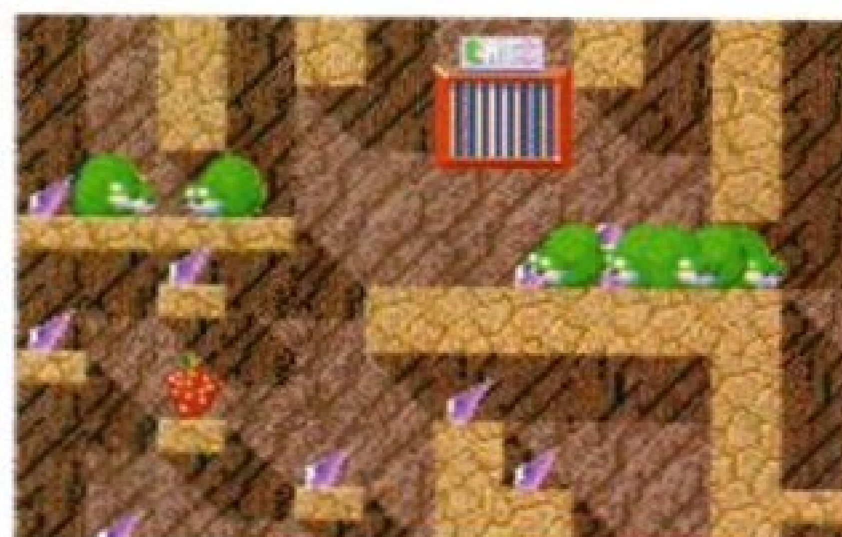
Publisher **Ocean**
Release **Christmas 1991**



Sensible Software (of *Mega-Lo-Mania fame*) aren't so sensible! Their name implies overt seriousness, but their next release should shatter all visions of sanity. *Wizkid* is a monumentally silly leap into the land of the cracked: it features a hero who can separate his head from his body and play two different styles of game. The head-only mode is loosely in the style of *Breakout*, while the body-side plays like a graphic adventure! How the two are mixed together is, well, silly! The combination works well together and the early versions are extremely playable, extremely weird and very daft.

Fuzzball

Publisher **System 3**
Release **December 1991**



System 3's *Fuzzball, comes* with cuteness levels that reach warp factor 10. The game concerns a small ball of fuzz that has to steal gems from under the noses of larger balls of coloured stuff. Packed with amusing enemies and secret screens, *Fuzzball* positively screams "play me". *AF* should get their reviewing hands on System 3's *Fuzzballs* next month.

Robocop 3

Publisher **Ocean**
Release **Christmas 1991**



Once you've seen one Robocop game you've seen them all. Wrong! *Robocop 3* is a radical departure because the whole show is in polygon 3D. The car chases and shoot outs will be enacted in the same way as *Cybercon 3* and flight sims. Another break from the norm is the game will be released before the movie. The film's out next Easter but the game should be with us in time for Christmas. Dear Santa...

A mercenary that uses public transport! He's saved the planet Eris from the Damocles comet, earned 51 million credits for doing so, but still has to use the bus to get around. Strange but true, the hero of two of computing's greatest games is reduced to using taxis, buses and intercontinental planes.

Any visitor to Timewarp prison in *Damocles* (*Mercenary II*) would have been thrown in a cell and sentenced to wait until the final part of the trilogy was released. The sentence is almost up and number three is on the way. Naturally, the game begins at Timewarp Prison, with the hero who released the instructions of the mysterious PC Bil.

This time the hero doesn't have the usual Mercenary spaceship to help him hop around the solar system on. Now he has to use space shuttles, planes, buses and taxis to travel across and between the worlds of Eris.

Local taxis are good outside Timewarp prison. It's your first taste of freedom since Damocles and the ride's free. Just why is the PC Bil character paying for you to zip around the universe? That's the first of many mysteries in Mercenary 3.



Mercenary 3

Mercenary managed to rewrite the C64 adventure rule book, Damocles redefined 3D romps on the Amiga. Mercenary 3 may well score the hat-trick.

Publisher **Novagen** Release **Christmas 1991**

Furthermore, he doesn't even have a specific mission, just a free travel pass and instructions to meet PC Bil.

Where to guv?

Mercenary 3 will be different, because now you can meet and talk to the people who inhabit the system's planets. Cab drivers will natter aimlessly, gossiping about important issues and swapping trivia. Major players can be tracked down and interviewed. These folks aren't just there to pass the time of day with though, they will supply Mercenary with both the solution and definition of his mission.

The characters crop up everywhere, in both vehicles and buildings, supplying the clues that drive the Mercenary on. To stop the game becoming just a simple case of zipping around collecting information any way you please, Paul Woakes delivers a gameplay masterstroke – stripping the hero of the ability to travel freely, literally

Now pedestrianised, finding and using public transport hits the game in two very different ways. Firstly travel takes some planning, so time is efficiently employed and all vital locations are visited. Secondly though, the finances restrict the Mercenary's actions.



So you're PC Bil then! What on Eris has been going on while you've been in jail? Ask the man, he may tell you, but he may not.



Make your fortune on a casino world. It's easy money if you win, but a million a shot!



Transport between planets is conducted by shuttle craft. Each costs cash but the pilot can supply clues, which makes the game beatable.



Another attraction that dares you to waste cash in hope of a quick return.

Only buses are free in the Eris system; taxis, planes and space shuttles cost big bucks. 51,000,000 credits may sound like it would take a life time to spend, but travel doesn't come cheap here. A long taxi ride can cost 500,000 on expensive planets and if you want to go on a long haul space flight, they cost far, far more. Money is needed for other areas of the game and so stripping the coffers with careless travel expenses leaves the Mercenary in an untenable position.

People power

"The problem with *Damocles* was that it felt empty," Bruce Jordan explains this as the reason for including real people in *Mercenary 3*. Now they are in place the difference is instantly apparent. The planets have a softer, less violent touch to them, but exhibit a much more devious edge – because people have the capacity to lie to you!

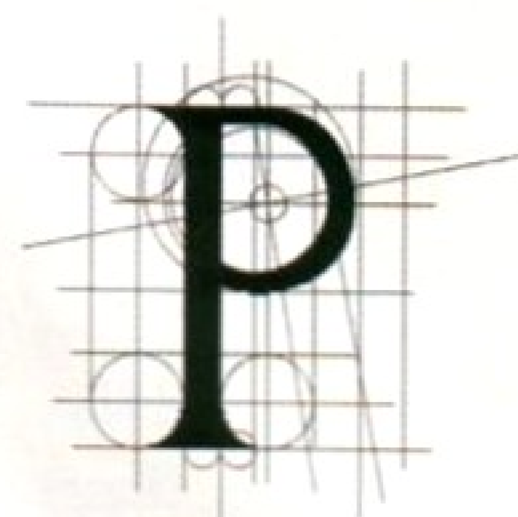
The new ingredients should add even greater depth to this 3D adventure world. The old factors still feature highly – a quirky sense of humour, smooth 3D, real-time planet movements, a convoluted adventure plot and simulation action tests of control – but now they are given a human face. The journey began way back in 1986 with *Mercenary* – which is currently enjoying a revival in C64-mad Eastern Europe – and now the trilogy is complete. If Novagen have got the balance of clues, transport tests and cash flow problems right then *Mercenary 3* will easily outstrip its illustrious antecedents. The ingredients are undeniably there and next month the tweaking will be over and the reviews can begin. Joins us on Eris for the report.

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PageStream 2.2, HotLinks, BME and PageLiner: available Winter '91. Art Expression: coming soon.

Hero Quest in the 21st Century – that's what it looks like, and it should play like *Laser Squad*, the classic war-game starring Space Marines. *Hero Quest* was a success because for the first time a board-game conversion captured – and improved upon – the spirit of the dice driven original.

Space Crusade is the sequel to *Hero Quest*, not in chronological terms but in terms of game system. Using the same basic structure of turns, actions and moves laid down in the dungeon-questing days. *Space Crusade* though, could be an improvement in every sense over its hack-and-slash counterpart. The graphics have been improved and with all of the Universe to work with, the game has grown both board-wise and in the number of characters that you control.

I need a hero

Hero Quest was praised for its accuracy, but this space quest offers more. The programmers have taken the board-game roots and then developed the concept to make use of the advantages a computer environment offers.

Space Crusade will be played from an overhead perspective switching to isometrics when actions are initiated. So, when a fire-fight erupts you'll see the bullets fly in 3D.



Space Crusade

Hero Quest shook computer gaming in much the same way it did the board-gaming fraternity. Gremlin's sequel looks as though it's going to follow suit.

Publisher **Gremlin** Release **Christmas 1991**

Originally Space Crusade was played on four interlinking boards that covered a maximum area of 26 x 26, but Gremlin's team have expanded the area to 40 x 40. And now each mission has a focus – the board version was more of a clean-up operation – so the player has to reach an objective: destroy a computer or liberate a piece of kit. As there can be up to three teams of marines competing or cooperating for the same goal, a new edge has been added to the battle.

The basic game structure, fans of the original will be glad to hear, has been rigidly adhered to. Each player can move and act once per turn. So they can walk to a new destination and then try to kill anyone they find there. Of course the 'anyone' could be the marines from another team, chaos nasties or even one of the super-evil Dreadnaughts.

As a player you control four marines and an officer character: which is you. The cannon fodder under your command are space wimps, but your character is real pokey. This adds an element of strategy to the *Hero-Quest*-style hack-em-up action. A lone marine won't really be able to handle himself in a heavy battle, so there will have to be fire groups and units of troops roaming the board if they aren't to wind up as an alien's breakfast.

Mouse-controlled through out, the game should be fast to play as the actions and icons are always on screen. Here two Blood-Angel troopers try to slay a Dreadnaught warrior – no chance!





Surprise! A bunch from the school of gun barrel diplomacy are set to surprise that bunch of chaos creatures. Effective use of the map will determine your fate.



When moving, a set of highlighted squares show all the moves that a character can make during a turn. Space Crusade is being made easy to pick up, but hard to win.

Toughties

The eight chaos creatures encountered too, will be different to their original's brethren as regards overall toughness. Most potent of all will be Dreadnaughts, who are as strong as your own squad leader and pack three weapons. With at least one of these on each of the 12 maps, you know there's going to be a major showdown of life threatening proportions in every game.

Programmer Michael Hart explained "We want *Space Crusade* to be straightforward enough to play instantly, but there will also be ways and means of doing the missions that add an element of strategy to the game". By boosting the original concept Gremlin could have hit upon an ideal formula. *Laser Squad* was incredible to play but lacked graphic sophistication. *Space Crusade* has sophistication plus an eerie game atmosphere, a big licence name and a proven pedigree. The space marines should launch out this Christmas and the *Format* reviewers will do battle with them in the next issue.

Programmers:
Michael Hart –
ST and Amiga programmer
Ade Carless –
Graphic Artist, all formats

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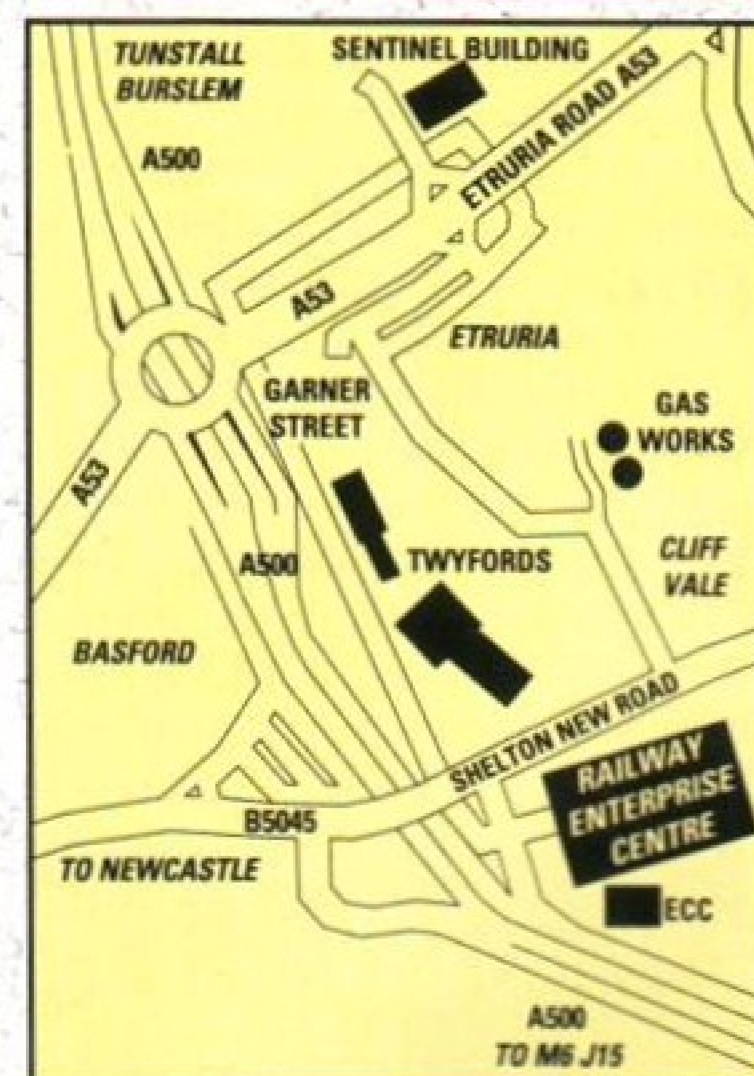
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GOVERNMENT, TRADE AND EDUCATIONAL ORDERS WELCOME

At last a war-game has come along that will pull the genre out of the trenches and appeal to arcade junkies as well as strategy-sim freaks...



Battle Isles

Battle Isles – This is a composite of a four screen war zone. Each player has their own map on half of the screen, which is scrolled around using a joystick cursor. Seen in full, you can see the big picture!

Computer war-games will never be the same again. UBI Soft have taken all the trappings from the table-top board-game, mixed in some cunning computer game design and created a war-game that looks too good to be tactically true. Here we have a strategy bash in arcade clothing.

This is a low-level combat simulator where military units, in a blow-by-blow battle, have to capture 16 islands, moving across a hexagonal board, accruing damage, earning experience and taking the opponent's territory. Victory depends on the ability to make maximum use of limited resources and having the occasional gamble.

These, though, are not entirely new concepts. What makes this game so different is its instant playability. Usually computer war-games are laden with icons and weighty manuals. Battle Isles dodges this problem with a smart joystick interface and a streamlined order of play, all at no cost to flexibility. The resulting game stresses tactical thought, but still plays fast and looks good.

Calling the shots

Single and two player is available and both are played on a split screen, one side is used to line up shots, while the other is for moving your units around. The divided screen restricts the size of the game window, but adds a flexibility and speed other computer war-games have been screaming for. It's perfectly permis-



Battle Isles stresses territorial possession and the left-hand team have just gained control of a factory; cue animated door busting.

Roads - offer great mobility but no cover at all. Use them for a quick sneak attacks only or forget it. Roads are dangerous kiddies!

Terrain – The land over which you send the vehicles affects their movement and fighting skills. Trees slow up tanks, but offer good protection from artillery. Vehicles can't go over mountains but they offer great cover for infantry.



sible to sit and watch your foe's moves, but the temptation to enact your own master plan proves irresistible.

Battle Isle's addictive gameplay hooks you in swiftly. The graphics are what lures you first: it simply doesn't look like a wargame. The maps and vehicles are well drawn, providing the necessary information without resorting to reams of text or figures. Even the mechanics of the game are dressed up and displayed in an instantly-appealing fashion. As the units do battle, for example, the random outcome of the conflict is shown as just a small-scale skirmish.

Control is mastered in the first few turns, leaving the grey-matter free to focus on tactics. That's the second major strike on your addiction centres, and it is almost impossible to repulse. Like a futuristic chess game, each piece and formation has different strengths.



After the war a graph is computed that shows the way the war went. Red had the upper hand all through the battle. They did start with a numerical disadvantage but the hardware.they had was superior.

The basic attributes of each unit are obvious but their tactical potential in the battle group is continually redefined. Each island gets sequentially tougher than the last, so new vehicles and buildings continually have to be assimilated into the overall strategy.

Outgun Europa

Play initially focuses on fire-power and experience. At your disposal for the first few



A Fav Buster is a mean vehicle that has range capability against land vehicles and aerial targets. Its light armour makes it very vulnerable in a head-to-head fire fight though, so it must be used with real caution.

battles are infantry, transport and light tanks. The heavier your armour the better the chance you have of emerging victorious. But, as the computer gets the better weapons deal, units must be merged to maximise fire-power. Once you get the hang of organising fire-power teams though, then the pleasure of kicking the computer's butt is well worth the effort.

Success in a battle earns your unit experience, which improves its accuracy and increases defensive capabilities. These veterans still take losses and you have to calculate the balance between experience and numbers. Will a few experts provide the cutting edge or will they be overwhelmed by superior numbers? These are the commander's choices, and the shots that *Battle Isles* forces you to make.

Home on the range

Once the theory of experience has proved itself in the field, then the structure of a unit



In this fire-resolution phase the combat is on the left, while the hexagon where the action takes place is highlighted in white.

assumes a new importance. Each counter on the map represents a squad of six similar vehicles or troops. In the animated combat resolution phase, these six vehicles are seen blasting the unit they attacked. Depending on the unit's experience, fire-power and luck they will kill a number of foes and take losses themselves. In this way the original six are slowly whittled down as their experience increases. Once a unit is wiped out, it's dead forever, but a whole unit can be built up again from a single survivor. If, and it's a big if, they can be guided back to base for a refit.

> Emerging unscathed from a battle brings on Rommel-like confidence. But then, look what happened to him.

The home base, as with everything in Battle Isles, has two strategic functions. Firstly it must be protected from any enemy infantry, who can storm the place and end the game. Secondly, it has a limited supply of spares which can be used to patch up veteran troops. An expert unit with only one remaining tank can be turned into a ferocious fighting force if given shiny new tanks. The tricky bit is earning a breathing space so such a re-supply is possible. Such planning quandries abound and give Battle Isles its strategic bite.

On later islands the home bases are supplemented with depots and factories. Depots are ammunition dumps that can be liberated by

Continued overleaf

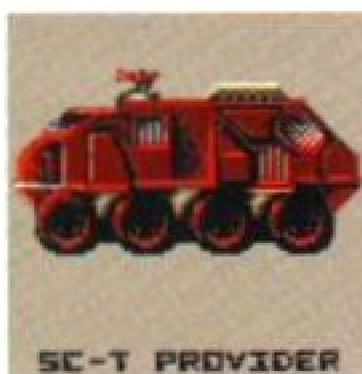


The yellow squad are trying to capture the red base. If they aren't killed in the next fire phase the yellow squadies will win the game.

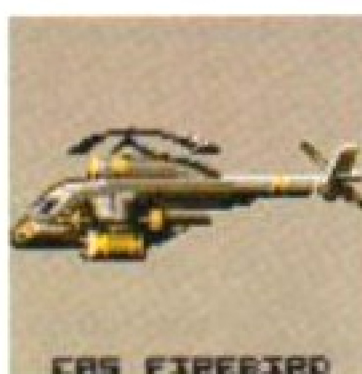
"So what does that red one with a large gun do then?"



The Blitz is primarily an air-defence weapon but experienced crews can also prove effective against tanks. They have light armour but pack a real punch in the fire-power department. Only use offensively in extreme cases.

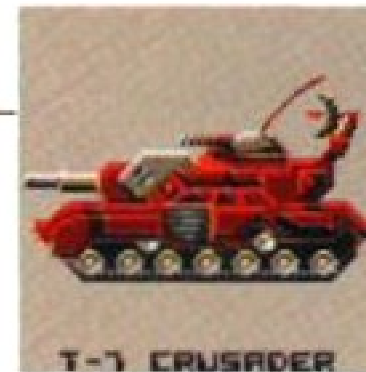


The Provider is a transport vehicle that can move troopers around far faster than they can walk. It has rather limited fire-power and totally duff armour. It can fill a gap in a fight, but is best used as a blocker or a workhorse.



The Firebird is a mean, lean, killing machine. It is lightly armoured but has missiles that really mess up armour. It is best used for raiding units that have no aerial-fire potential, so it can sit there and just take pot shots.





The Crusader is the main heavy tank. It has both land-and-air attack capabilities of quite devastating proportions. Its tough armour makes it very hard to kill and an excellent front-line assault vehicle.



The Gladiator is a light battle tank, that has a good gun but rather flimsy armour. It fulfils a hit-and-run function on its own or can be used as part of a fire group. With its speed it can also outrun most enemies.



The Demon infantry are weak when fighting armour but are the only units that can occupy bases, depots and factories. Keep some alive if you want to win, kill all the enemies if you want to limit his chances.

the first infantry on the scene – they've also a small repair capacity. Factories are much more fun and provide the facilities to build brand new vehicles from scratch. Both add a little spice, forcing a straight foot race to reach them at the beginning of the battle. You have to get there first to liberate the kit, but such tactics spreads your forces rather thin. These add fuel to the tactical fire from the very first move, impressing the need for swift, decisive action.

Compound factor

Compounding these factors is Battle Isle's turn structure. At any time you are either moving or firing, when you're doing one the computer (or second player) is doing the other. Understanding this artificial time system is vital if you want to win. Even the best plan can fail if initiated at the during the wrong phase.



A gratuitous piccy from the tongue-in-cheek intro section. If you want to watch it, then boot from disk one, if not from disk two!

The structure has been well thought through, interspersing tactical brainwork with nail-biting moments of truth when battles are resolved.

Battle Isles is at its best when the combat is joined and the dice of chance are rolling. When units go heads up, there's a tense feeling of impending doom, even massive superiority in experience or armour is no guarantee of success, fate still holds the key. Emerging unscathed from a battle brings on a sly feeling of Rommel-like confidence. But then, look what happened to him!

Done to a turn

All the best elements in war-games; turns, moves and targets, are brought to the fore, while the computer does all the boring donkey



The tank (left screen) is lining up a shot. The 'i' marker shows the tank's target and the resultant battle is resovled in the next phase.

work of checking rules and regulations. It's friendly to the beginner, with every action politely questioned before it's enacted, but streamlined enough for experienced players to speed through their actions.

The graphics help push *Battle Isles* towards victory. Occupying a factory, depot or base freezes the action while a short cartoon trooper blasts through a solid metal door, while annihilating an enemy ushers in a calm display of hardware at the end of the game. If you storm a base while the battle's still raging, then a mopping-up sequence is your reward. These scenes add that extra visual impact that previous war-games lack. They make it look like a straightforward arcade shoot out, and disguise the nature of the gameplay until you're hooked.

Victory! This screen greets crafty commanders who have managed to destroy all of an enemies' vehicles but not captured their base. The scene shown for a base victory is much more grisly.



The gameplay lies in its depth and flexibility. In both one and two player modes, each successive scenario introduces new vehicles or other twists. Strategies must be instantly formed that incorporate these new factors and their potential noted for the play book. A skill learned on the present island is accepted as standard for the next. It's a step-by-step tutorial that prepares you for a final battle and the ultimate showdown is apocalyptic, displaying a range of hardware to shame Desert Storm.

The programmers, Blue Byte, have reinvented the war-game genre making a game fit for heroes. It's simple but possesses real gameplay depth. The basic principals take minutes to learn, but are sharpened and refined in each successive scenario. The tanks and troops are extended chess pieces and the landscape is your board, it is your ability to use them effectively that is the appeal of the game. This graphic and gameplay mix ensure war-games will never look the same again.

Trenton Webb

Battle Isles
UBI Soft ■ £29.99

- Good graphics for a war-game!
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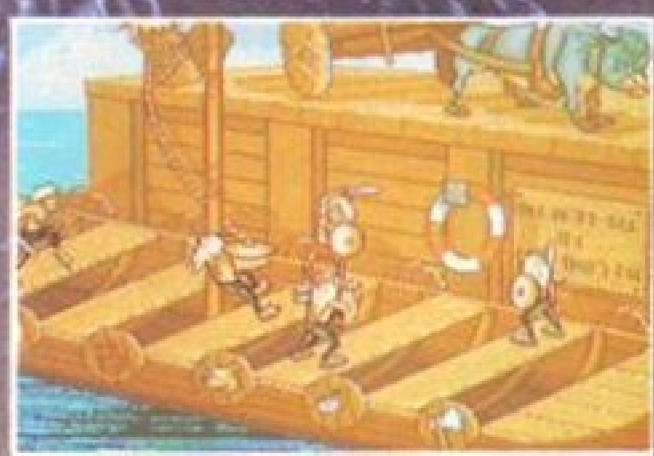
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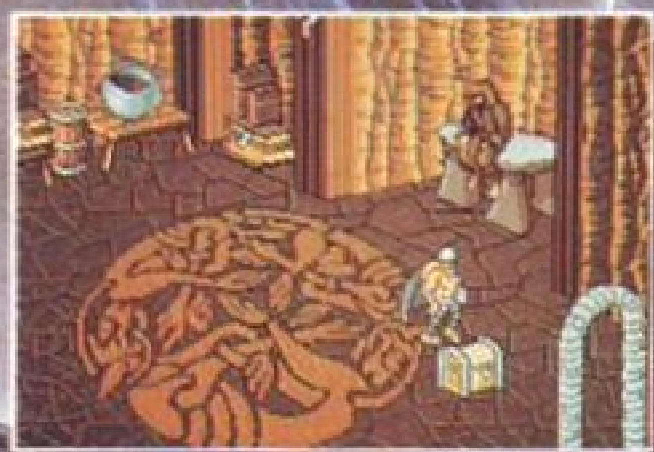
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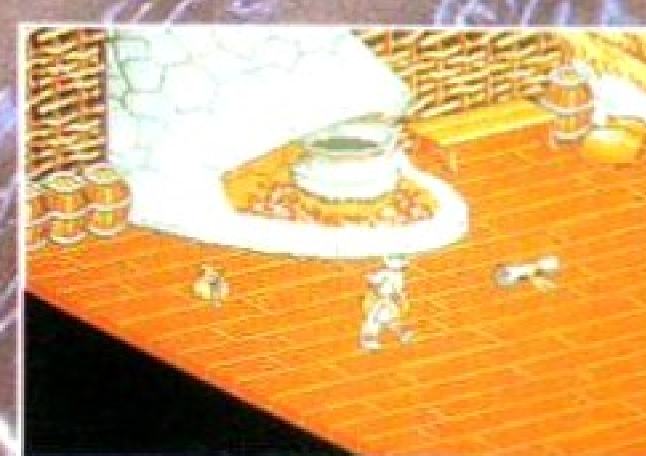
Norse legend tells of a time when the Gods of Valhalla and Asgard created a race known as the Vikings. Born to represent his people at the battle of Ragnorak, Heimdall must first fight, solve puzzles and explore the Viking world to find the weapons of the Gods.











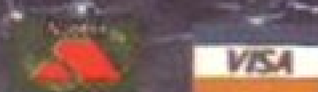




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The campaign map. As well as assessing the targets you're about to trash, you can select a null-modem head-to-head link up with another Amiga. Then the fun really starts!

Another successful mission without a scratch. Careful as you land, though. The MiG is forgiving, but if you come in too hard you'll bend it. And they're expensive to have straightened out.





The MiG's outside views have got to be the best seen on any Amiga flight-sim. Here, it is leaving its home base on another mission.

MiG-29M Su

MiGs are no longer feared by the F15-flying West. But with Domark's Superfulcrum it's software houses that better beware.

When Mikoyan rolled out the MiG 29 a couple of years ago the West was impressed. When Domark rolled out a sim based on the aircraft, Amiga owners were impressed. So was *Amiga Format*, who gave it 91per cent and a Format Gold. But since then Mikoyan has upgraded their fighter and so has Domark.

The first thing you'll notice (apart from a swankier loading screen) is you have four options for the number of colours and screen lines. This plays off visual appeal against speed. If you want the smoothest, quickest update you'll forfeit colour and detail but it does make a noticeable difference. Once selected, the set-up stays until you reboot.

Flying high on the campaign trail

MiG-29M actually gives you a complete war to take part in, whereas the original game just had six missions which you could play in any order. A map flashes up and you're plunged into a campaign. If you beat them all you could fly a tougher, previously inaccessible mission. There are several enemy airbases, a truck convoy and a large number of buildings. All these are legitimate targets, but before you belt off to attack them you should first log on as a named pilot.

You can also alter your weapon payload, choosing between air-to-air and air-to-surface missiles. Once you're happy it's time to go.

The cockpit display is similar to the original. The noticeable difference is the greater ground detail. A control tower (with associated radar buildings) sits to your left and an evil range of mountains glint in the distance.

Full power sends you howling down the runway. Pull up at 400 km/h and... nothing happens, not unless you select ALT-J before your first flight, otherwise the computer won't recognise the joystick. It's irritating at first.

Once in the air, the MiG handles like a dream. It's more powerful than the original, and feels livelier. Throw it around and you'll soon find out that the program is also smoother and more responsive.

Two yoghurts and a pint of Fulcrum

The first mission pits you against a lone fighter which takes off from a base about five minutes flying time away. As you scramble you will find the chap on your long-range

Here come the bad guys. Arm the AA8s and wait to get on his tail (where you've got the best chance of a decent strike). When the lock turns red, fire and watch as his eyes water quite uncontrollably.



LET SLIP THE DOGS OF WAR

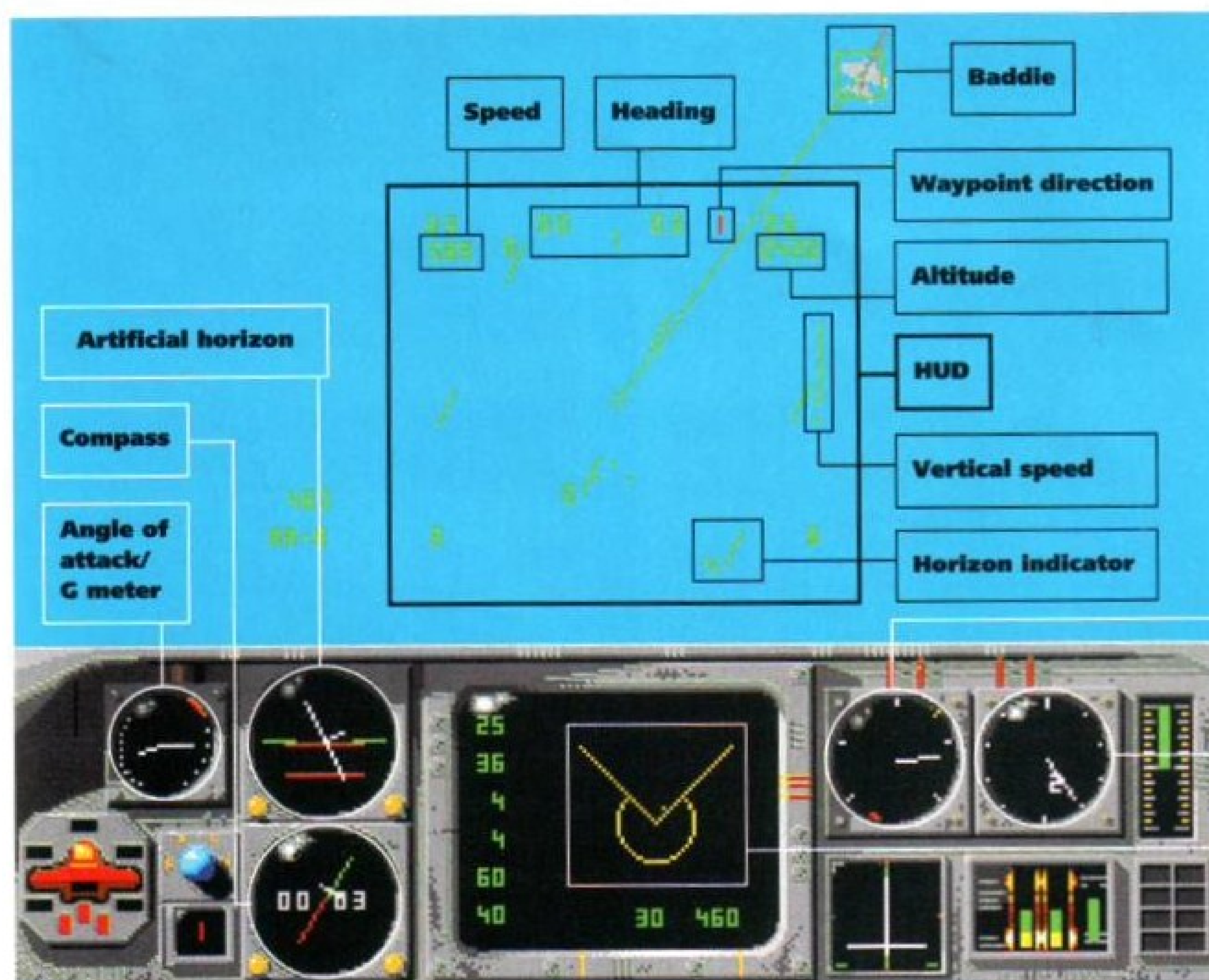
The MiG-29M is a fighter aircraft. So its air radar is the best that the Russians have got. It's an aircraft-killer. In the game you can select different weapon configurations to tailor your payload for the type of mission you'll be flying.

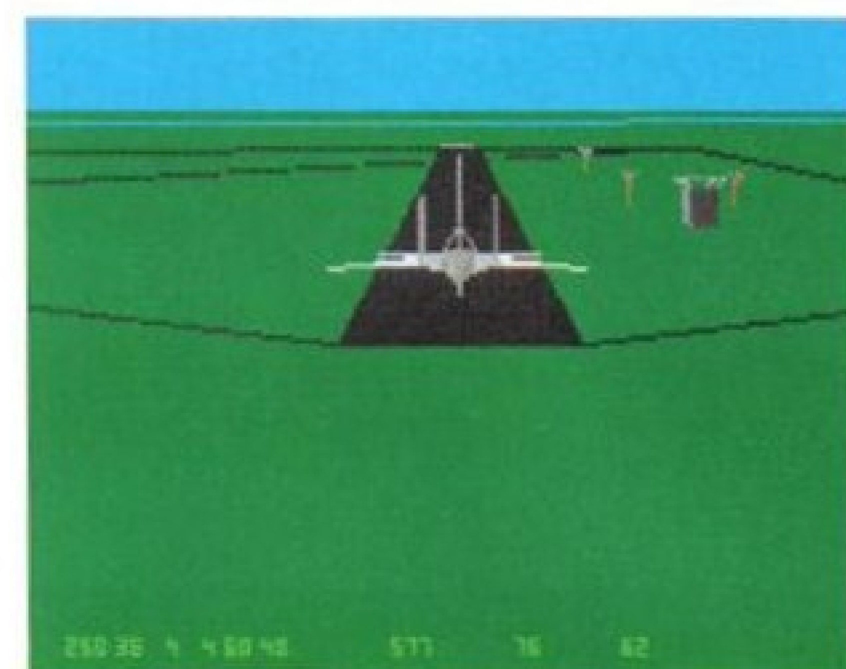
AA-8 Aphid
Stupid name, lethal weapon. A heat-seeking air-to-air missile. When you get a red-lock (the missile box turns red) it's telling you to fire now while you are in a good position. The missile launches Mach 3 and can easily out-turn the enemy. So wait a few seconds and you should have a kill.

AS-7 Kerry
This air-to-surface heat-seeking missile looks for the nearest ground target. It's accurate but hardened buildings won't be destroyed by just one, so on a strike mission, take as many as you can carry and try and outrun any fighters you meet rather than engage them with the cannon.

Cannon
The GsH 23mm is seen on many Soviet fighters. It fires wherever you point it, so if you're aiming at other planes, you'll have to get really close and be really accurate.

S-240
Unguided rockets which destroy any ground target. Useless against other planes (unless they're on the ground). You can see where shots are going, so you can 'walk' fire along the ground and onto the target. They're best at close range (nearer than 2km). You've got 36 so don't waste them, but they do create very pretty explosions.




The MiG leaps off the runway like a cat on a ceramic hob. And if you point the thing vertically it'll climb like Chris Bonnington overdosing on Kendal Mint Cake.


For a fighter, the MiG-29 is a rather wicked ground-attack aircraft. Stable, fast and controllable, it makes frying an enemy-held garden shed a doddle.

perfulcrum

radar. You can head straight towards him and hope you get a lucky hit or you can vector around and intercept him from behind. This is a neat trick if you can pull it off without letting him know you're there. A missile right up his engines will soon see him spinning into the ground. As he goes down you see chunks of his aircraft departing from the airframe.

This is easy enough if you can keep your wits about you, but as you come up against other aircraft, you realise that instead of just flying around you in wide circles, the enemies in *MiG-29M* employ proper air-to-air combat manoeuvres such as high-G turns, Immelmanns and scissors interceptions. It's as real as it can get and as you learn, it gets more fun.

Kill the fighter, though, and you'll end up in the vicinity of his base. It's a nice juicy target so you may as well hit it with an air-to-surface missile. Lock on to a hangar and fire when ready. With today's high-tech weaponry it's as easy as that (no wonder the Gulf War was won so easily).

Evade, adapt and hopefully survive

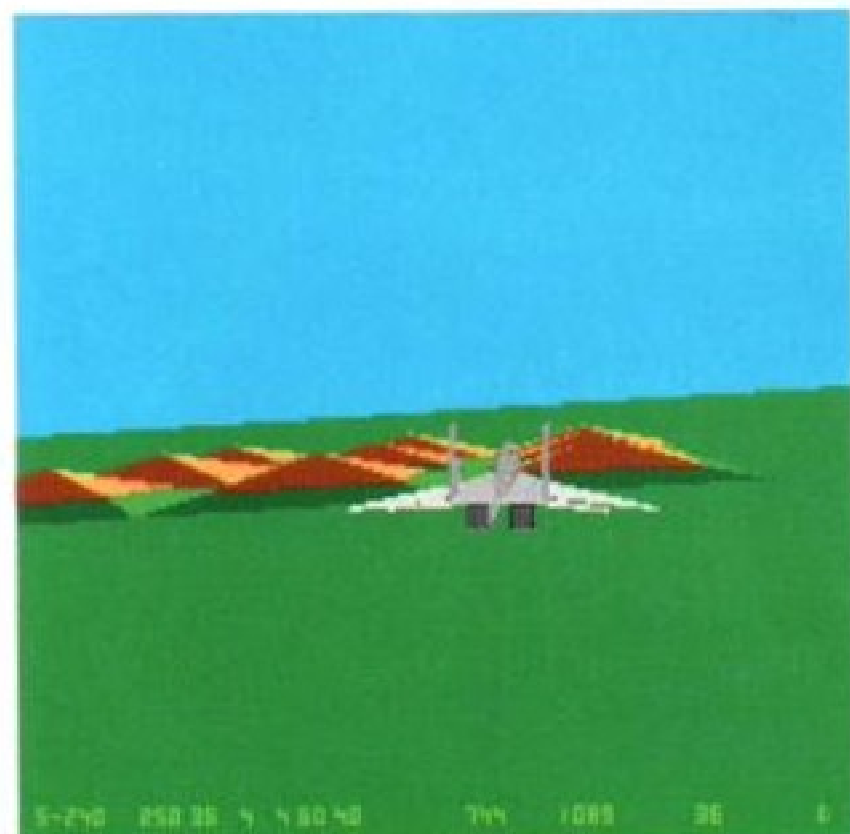
The colour/screen lines selection system is a master touch, allowing you to play either a quick-fire, highly-responsive game (without too much ground detail) or a scenic exploration of the map. The scenic route is still very playable and unless you've just been playing on the faster level, you might not even notice the difference in speed.

The game retains the original's all-round outside views and even has a missile view which lets you ride your hardware right until the moment of impact. There is also an enemy-view mode, which puts you in the opposing aircraft's cockpit. You can't see his instrumentation, but you can see his HUD, targeting system and his speed and altitude. If you're using this mode to cheat, that's all you need to gain an unfair advantage. You can still control your plane so it's possible to carry out all your evasive manoeuvres whilst watching from the other plane.

One niggling problem which Domark have carried over from *MiG I* is the target selector turns itself off after about 20 seconds (or after you launch a missile), so you have to re-engage it. If a real MiG does this then it's a realistic feature, though.

This is a minor criticism though. *MiG-29M Superfulcrum* is an excellent simulation, and definitely improved on the original. Graphics, speed, gameplay and the war-game scenario all add up to flying around in a brilliant type of Russian aircraft type of experience. It's easy to get into and very deep when you do. What more could you ever want from a flight sim?

James Leach


If you're careful you can weave your way through the mountains. It's useful for evading unwanted fighter attention. But one mistake and you're part of the scenery.

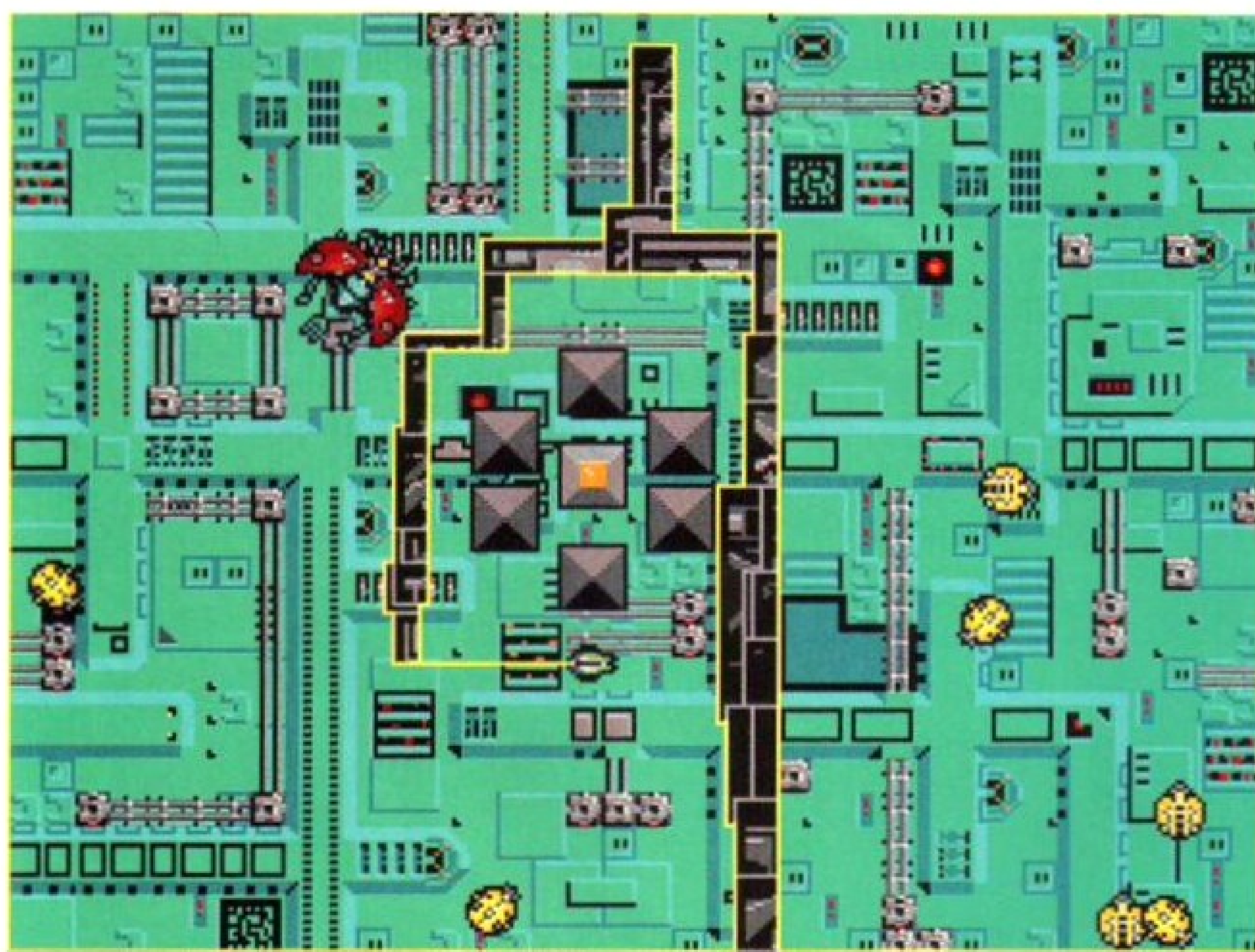
Arrgh! There's bogies all over me! Head on and you and the enemy have a combined speed of something like Mach 4, so launching missiles isn't a good idea as they can't turn and chase quickly enough.



MiG-29M Superfulcrum
Domark ■ £29.99

- The graphics are fast and smooth.
- The air-to-air combat is *the* best you'll find on any flight sim.
- Playing the campaign adds that extra touch of authenticity.
- *MiG-29* was good. *MiG-29M* is better.
- Thank goodness the Cold War has ended.

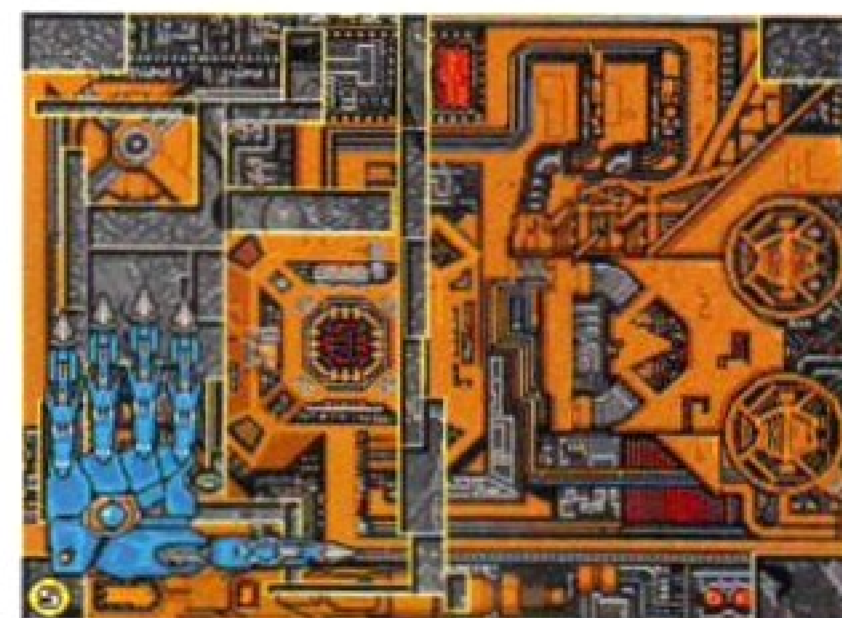
AMIGA FORMAT Verdict 89%



With all the small aliens safely corralled into the right hand side of the screen, it's a much safer place to play. The Volfied has shrunk too. Surrounding all the grey blocks will yield lots of power ups, so the end of this level is in sight!



The shield has run out, and the little aliens know about it too, they just won't let you alone. Leaving the side would be suicide.



And now, a big hand for the Volfied. Until this one shrinks, there's no chance of capturing him in one of those small areas.

Volfied

Did you like *Qix*? If you did then you'll love this. However, if you found *Qix* a tedious affair you may not be so impressed, because this is a reworking of that old stager. Yes the early Eighties 'not quite a classic' arcade has been given the full bells-and-whistles treatment, in this conversion of the Taito coin-op. But is it good enough to warrant your hard-earned pennies being flung into softhouse's coffers?

For those who are not familiar with *Qix*, it involved trying to surround an alien that bounced about the centre of the screen by scooting around in your small craft leaving a trail: light-cycle stylie. The areas you encircle become yours, and the alien 'Volfied' can no longer venture onto that part of the screen, a nice touch in *Volfied* is that captured regions show the next level's playfield through in monochrome. It sounds simple enough, doesn't it? But that's until you find out about the herd of smaller aliens, each one a replica of the big mother, that troll around the screen in a semi-intelligent manner trying their level best to stop you ensnaring the dangerous Volfied. Not so simple!

Direct contact with any of the baddies will bring about a 'player death', ie you lose a life. As you circle the edge of the screen looking for opportunities to foray into enemy territory, you are protected by a shield, the duration of which ticks away relentlessly, but while you make your excursion you are unprotected. If an alien makes contact with your trail a spark will set out from the point of contact and trace after you. If it catches you before you manage to reach the edge, and the safety of your shield, a player death will occur.

Surrounding one of the grey squares littering the screen yields either a points bonus or a power-up. A level is completed by surrounding over 80 per cent of the screen, then you get



If this ship ever makes it to the other side he'll have captured a massive amount of screen, but the Volfied knows he's there. This manoeuvre should be reserved for when you have a speed up, or you want to die so that you can nip off to the bog.

big points for every per cent above that magic number. And that's where the strategy comes in, because as you surround the Volfied it gets smaller so that it can squeeze through the gaps, and when it's smaller it's easier for you to capture a bigger area of the screen.

Déjà vu

The problem with it is unlike *Super Space Invaders 91*, it's no better than the original. For all the impressive graphics and twists on the original gameplay, it's just *Qix* in a party frock. The intro is crap and if you blink you'll miss it, and that sets the standard for the other non-game intervals. The bonus and high-score screens would not look out of place on a game a decade or so old, and when you lose a life all that happens is the music stops, oh! and it prints "Player death" at the top of the screen. It wouldn't be fair to be too critical of the game though, because the control is smooth, the loading of levels quick, and the graphics are on the better side of adequate. And underneath it all there is a very good game trying to get a little recognition.

It can be played on two levels, a simple get-through-as-many-levels-as-you-can romp, or a I'm-gonna-get-you-sucker war of attrition for every last per cent of every last screen. And it's here we run into what is possibly the most telling failing of the game. To get big points you have to capture more than 99 per cent of the screen, but the collision detection is not accurate enough for you to carve those fine lines that let you avoid the Volfied by a millimetre and reap the richest rewards.

For all its failings this is still a refreshing change from the identikit vertically-scrolling beat-em-up sims we see every month.

Marcus Dyson

I got the power!

- (L) **Lasers, let you shoot the small aliens, lasts for a short time.**
- (S) **Speed up, increases the speed you travel at till you die.**
- (P) **Shield countdown freezes you for a few seconds.**
- (C) **Clears the level of all the small aliens.**
- (T) **Time freeze, all the aliens stop for 10 seconds.**

Volfied
Empire ■ £25.99

- In game graphics are bright, well drawn and attractive.
- Poor intro, between level bonus and high-score screens let the quality slide.
- Control is smooth and responsive.
- Collision detection is not as accurate as the gameplay requires.
- The faults belie the quality of the basic game. A potential gem, but badly executed.



72%

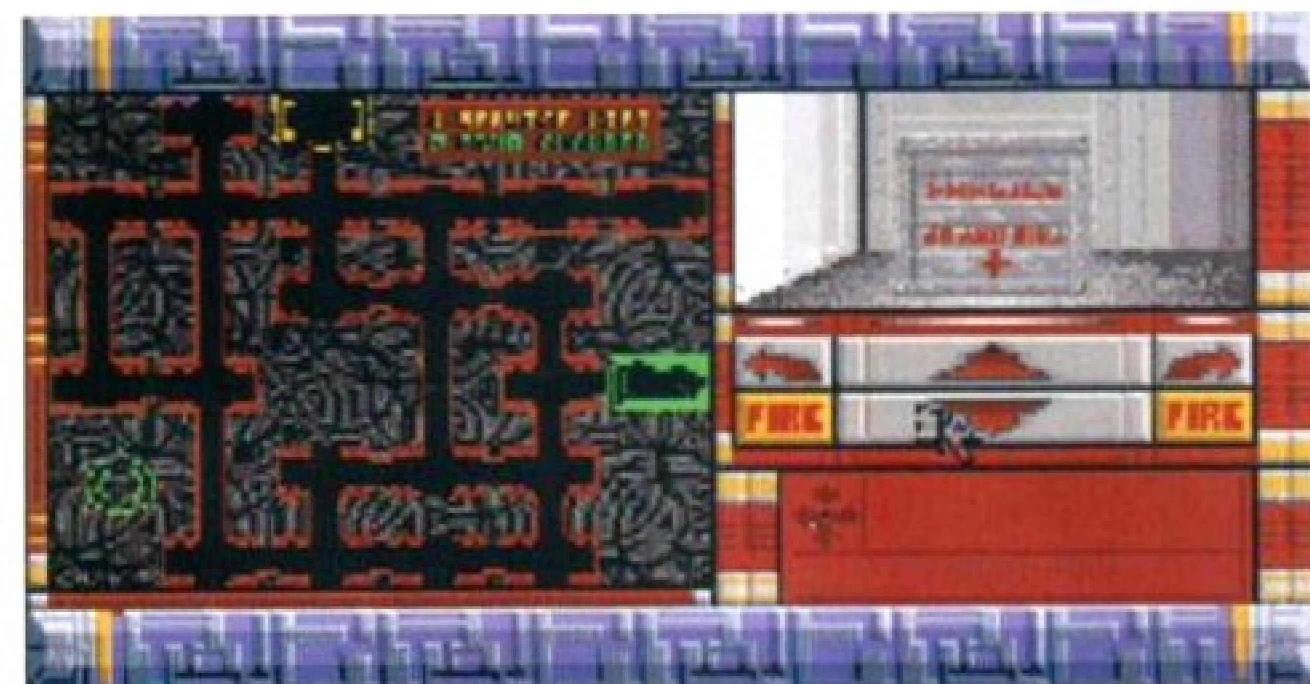
Set in a microcosm reminiscent of the Cyberpunk universe, *Suspicious Cargo* follows the plight of the (anti-)hero: Jonah Hayes, or plain-and-simple Mr Hayes to his enemies. He's a space cowboy that has a death-wish. Our Jonah, bears more than a passing resemblance to Han Solo: he's a fly-by-night devious smuggler who usually falls flat on his face. He has been commissioned, albeit involuntarily, by his creditors Universal Products (a world-wide megacorp) to deliver a package of illicit description to Earth.

Why is Jonah on this adventure? Well the scenario so far is that worldwide chaos and disorder was caused by the Hyper-Zvirus which devastated the planet during the late 20th century. Several corporations developed antidotes for the virus. Instead of mass producing them cheaply, for the good of all humanity, they exploited their monopoly into a position of such power that they effectively controlled the world. These megacorps, each believing themselves invincible, soon began to fight amongst each other for a greater share of the potential market for their medicines, which by their addictive nature had become a form of drug the population was now dependent upon.

A text adventure that isn't! Suspicious Cargo can be played via icons or through the more traditional text methods. All the actions needed for the game, though, can be clicked up. It takes a bit of practice but if you can get the hang of the system then it makes a refreshing way to play.



Suspicious Cargo



In a sub-game Jonah Hayes goes walkabout in the cargo hold. The map on the left shows where he is, while the window on the top right shows what he can see. Is that crate the suspicious cargo?

They were now powerful enough to sling loads of conventional hardware at each other, many seeking additional advantage by resorting to their medical know-how and developing fiendish new biological and genetic weapons, to give them that extra edge required to help them become all-dominant. Universal Products followed this dubious and questionable path and decided to developed a totally new kind of genetically engineered being. A mutant not to be messed with...

Blue Hotel

Due to the nature of the cargo he has been instructed to carry, it is of utmost importance that the package be delivered safe and sound and as quickly as possible. Waking up from his casket in the Coffin hotel where he's been staying, Hayes is informed of the task he has been forced to undertake by a note delivered to him by a mean messenger, along with a navigational cartridge to aid him in his travels. From here on, it's up to you.

Getting into the game is rather difficult, because death has an overwhelming (and annoyingly frequent) presence. But then, what kind of an adventure game is easy anyway? Adventure game? Aaaaarghhh! Loads of typing! Gremlin have been rather adventurous themselves in this game and have employed a totally new user interface, with the use of a very intelligent icon system. Essentially this means instead of having to type in your commands all the time (although you can if you want to and get messages like "Can't understand words 'commit suicide'.") you can use the program's icon system which contains pictorial representations of all the commands necessary to play the game.

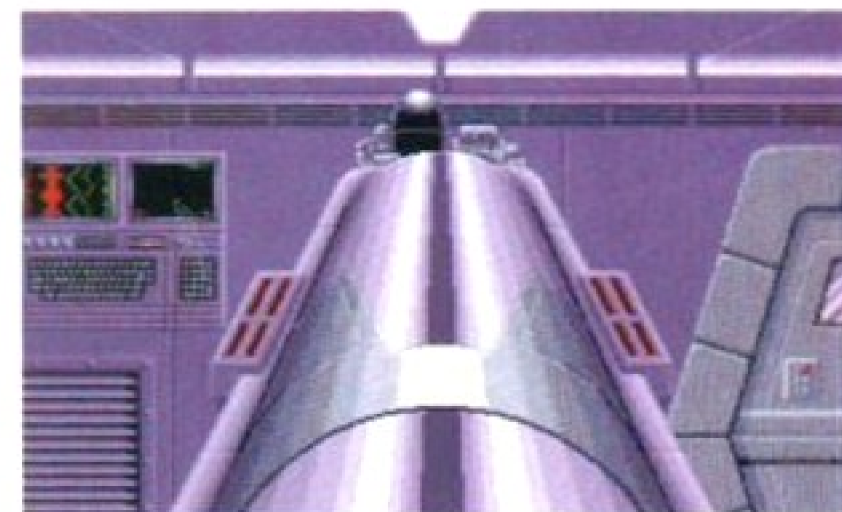
This adventurous input system makes the game flow a lot faster than most adventure games, a common problem being lack of speed, and as such makes it a lot more playable. Even if you are foolish enough to try and use the parser (the text translator) you'll find that it copes admirably with most of what you can throw at it.

Sixth sense

Another excellent feature is the map facility. This can be extremely useful, enabling you to see exactly where you are on any of the ships and also to see where the other characters are at any one time. It also serves as a tool to allow you to select where you want to go on the spacecraft by simply clicking the required destination on the map. This saves a lot of hassle by eliminating the need to create your own map, and allowing you to cross the ship quickly and easily without having to remember the name of the room you want to go to.

Now where is the bathroom in this place? Using the ship map, you can skip around the decks really quick. It looks dead pretty too!





Down in the cold storage room something stirs. Oh it's you trying to get out of the cabinet you've locked yourself in! Fool!

3am Eternal

If adventure games aren't usually your sort of thang, you'll probably find this one compelling and will keep you hacking through to the early hours until you progress to a respectable level. The game system works well and provides an easy way of controlling the game. In-game graphics are understandably limited, but what there is, is good – the game often has incidental screens that appear when selected, to give a view of the current scene. Sound is sparse, but then what would you expect from an adventure game? For novelty, there are also a few interactive arcadey-type incidental games, which add little to the game, but are nevertheless interesting and add a nice little touch.

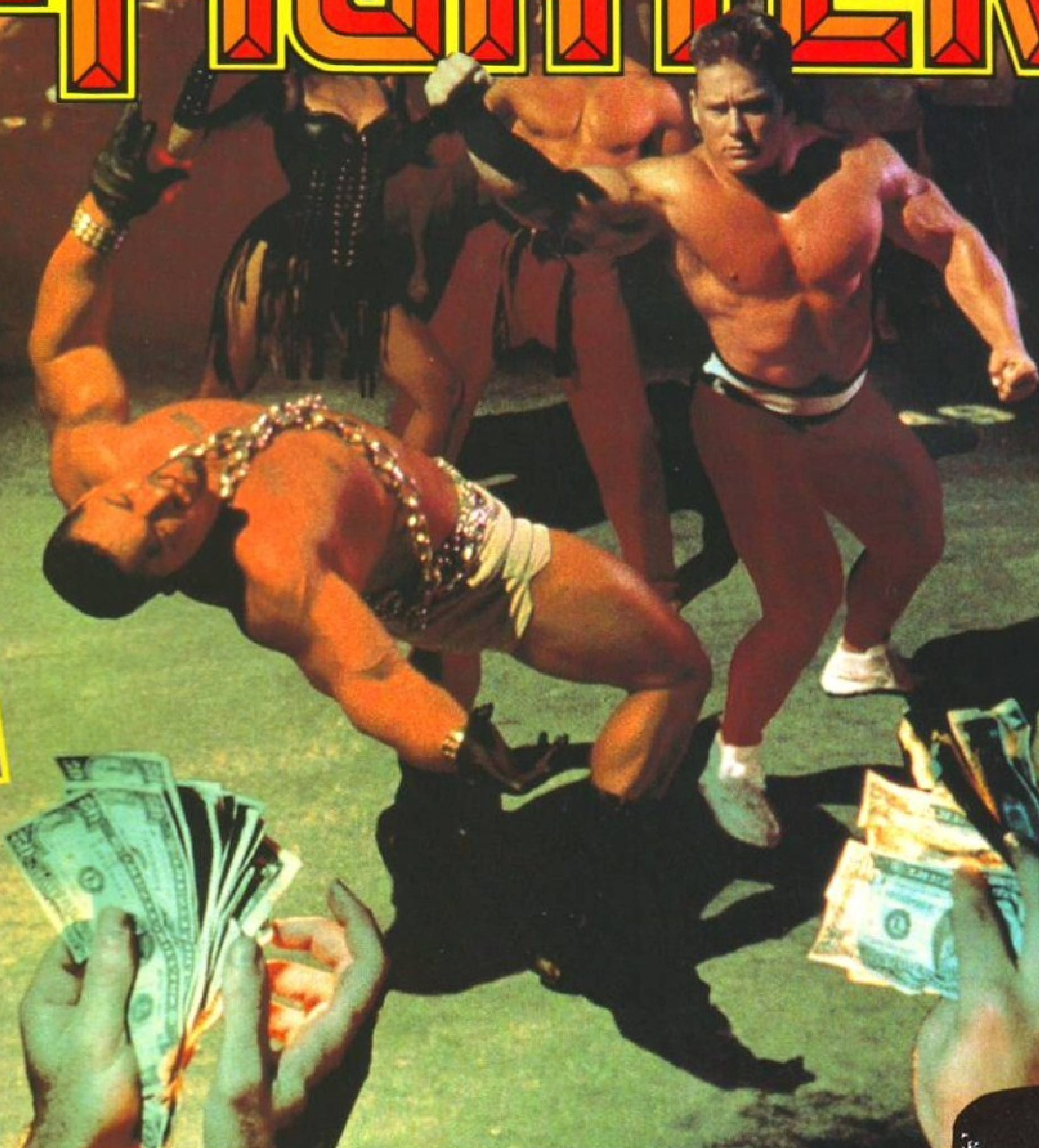
Asam Ahmad

Suspicious Cargo
Gremlin Graphics ■ £25.99

- Novel input system that works well.
- Compelling plot, that keeps you interested.
- Excellent map control system.
- Lots of screen options, to suit everyones' individual tastes.
- Have to do things according to the plot – you cannot diversify.

Amiga Format Verdict 80%

THE NO. 1 ARCADE COIN-OP HIT.













AMIGA SCREENSHOTS



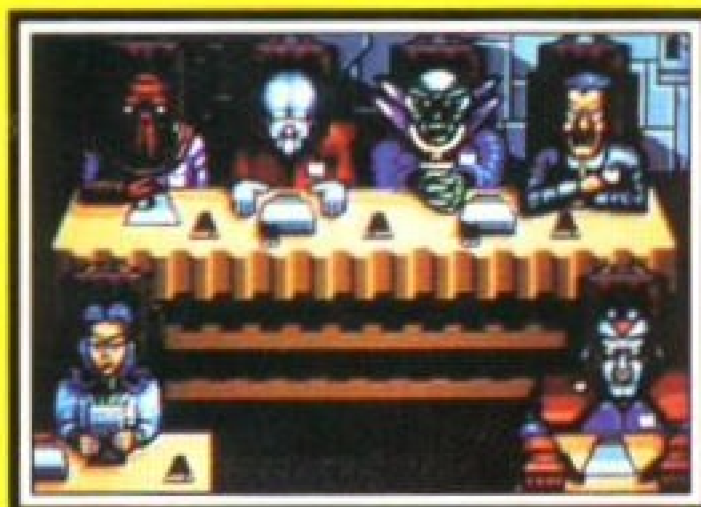
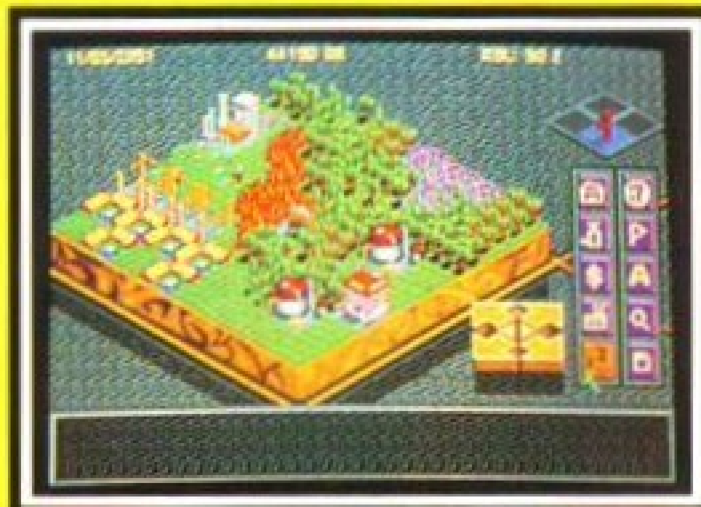
Welcome to the meanest, toughest way of making a living!
Enter the World of Pitfighting – fighting for money.
Do you rate your chances in a free for all, no holds barred bare knuckle fight?
You'll have to face thugs like The Executioner, Heavy Metal and Chain Man Eddie.
Use every form of fighting – martial arts,kickboxing, stab with knives, throw bar stools, beer kegs and anything else you can lay your hands on.
Remember you're never safe – even from the crowd – get thrown into them and you may never come out alive.
Incredible graphics, digitised from real fighters, and amazing real time sprite scaling, bring you the perfect conversion of Atari's No. 1 Arcade Hit.
You'll never tire of this brutally addictive game!!



DOMARK

TENGEN

UTOPIA
THE CREATION OF A NATION





Screen shots from various formats.



"The best game Gremlin has ever released." **94%**



"A cross between Sim City & Populous." **93%**



"Utopia is an excellent game."



93% "The next Generation in Godgames"



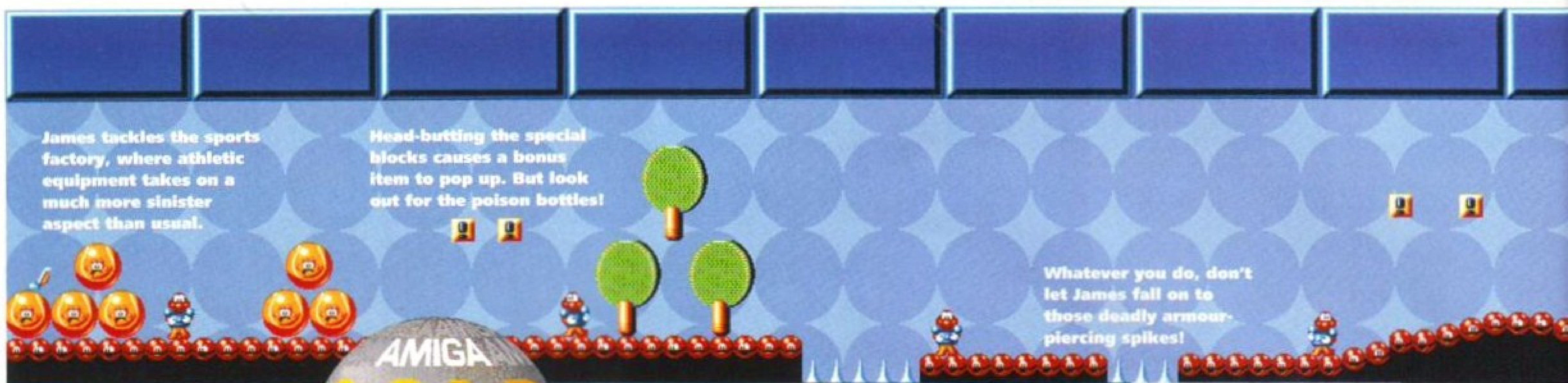
Ace Rated **920**

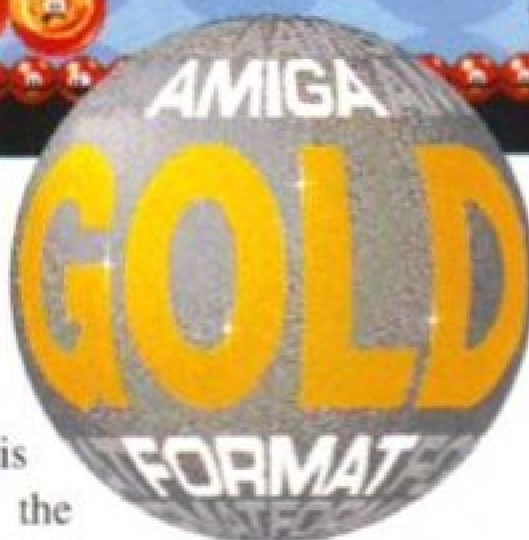
Can you create Utopia? Now's your chance to find out. Leading a colonising party to a barren planet you aim to create the perfect society, where everyone has a quality of life rating of 100%. Do you spend your money on weapons or social research? Build hospitals or tank factories? The myriad of decisions to be made are yours, and the fact that there are over ten different alien races all bursting for the opportunity to wipe out the colony should speed up the decision making process. An icon driven game with the main playing area presented in isometric 3-D, Utopia breaks new ground in computer entertainment.



Available on: PC (1992), AMIGA & ATARI ST/STE.

Gremlin Graphics Software Ltd., Carver House, 2-4 Carver Street, Sheffield S1 4FS.





Robocod

Tough armour combined with a lifetime of undersea experience. Ladies and gentlemen - we present the future of fish enforcement.

Not too long ago, the dreaded Doctor Maybe tried to take over the world by setting up his enterprises out at sea. In order to satisfy his maniacal greed, he suppressed the ocean's inhabitants and set up rigs to churn out pollution at an alarming rate.

The super underwater-espionage unit, FI5H, managed to place an undersea agent inside Maybe's operations and the scaly super-agent thwarted the evil tyrant's plans. That fish was Pond... James Pond.

However, megalomaniacs very rarely disappear for long, and the world's leaders have evidence which would suggest that strange things are happening at the North Pole. A force of robotic soldiers has managed to infiltrate the factory complex of a Mr S Claus, a jovial fellow who carries out charitable work all over the world, particularly during December. After escaping from his sabotaged work place, Mr Claus revealed to the press and top politicians that a strangely familiar character was trying to take over his operations to make heavy demands on the people of the world. It appears that Maybe has returned!

The prime minister has announced that FI5H have decided to take on the mission. Hope rests on one person. The suave and scaly Mr Pond. All haste must be taken to reach James, who has been on an extremely rigorous training program – a program which, until now, has remained secret. The reason? Well James now has a new form. His body has been adapted using a new breed of fishy cybernetics. James Pond is now Robocod.

Gone fishin'

The form of this sequel is radically different to the first, highly successful, Pond adventure, becoming more of a console-style jump-and-collect game rather than a platform shoot-em-up. You take control of James in his mission to infiltrate the North Pole factory complex and repel the evil Doctor Maybe.

The warped maniac has planted a series of bombs disguised as penguins throughout the various factory sections, threatening to explode them if his demands aren't met. This would ruin Christmas for billions of people all over the world, so success is paramount.

You must travel to the factory complex and break into the various sections to defuse the bombs. The sections are dedicated to the production of various items:

Sports
This is where various sporting goods, such as golf clubs, table-tennis sets and boxing gloves are made. Find a pressie for dad here!

Toys
Deadly dolls prowling pom-poms and terrifying teddies abound in this cuddly nightmare. Don't trust your children to those cute fellows – they pack a pretty mean punch!

Confectionery
Chrimbo treats are scrummy... if they don't turn round and bite you! You may never be able to face a liquorice all-sort again!

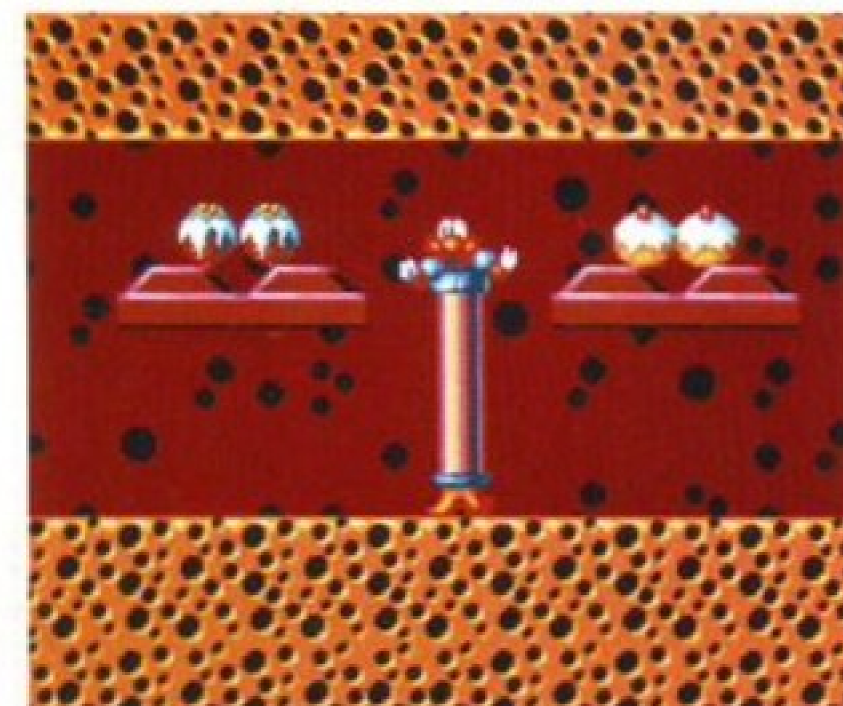
Mechanicals
Tools, cogs and machinery may be useful, but they can be dangerous at the hands of an evil maniac! Watch out for the nasty cars and trains on this section.



An aeroplane! That's pretty handy! Right... goggles on, start engine and chocks away! It's time to make a speedy getaway before that monster machine starts spewing all sorts of nasty creatures into the arena.

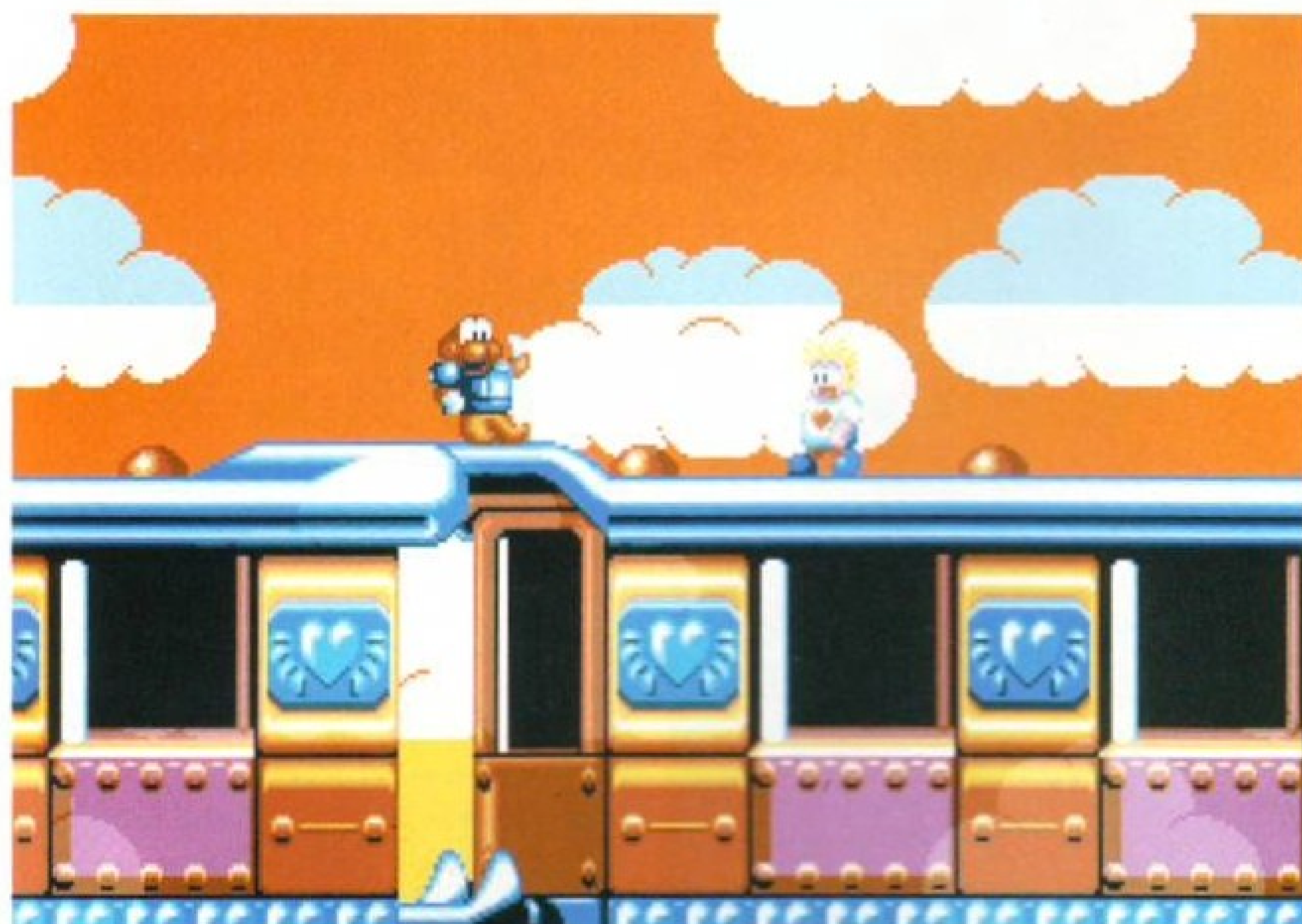


No, we haven't made a mistake! This is one of those highly disorientating upside-down levels. Just keep jumping – you'll get used to it.



A chocaholic's dream! Being surrounded by Aero in the sweet section get's a bit sticky!





After securing the ground floor of Mr Claus' North Pole factory complex, James must do battle with this incarnation of furry death – an example of Dr Maybe's twisted mind!



Bathroom
Sweet-smelling soaps and bath items for mum, but these dangerous items may be a tad too deadly to make the perfect gift.

Castles
Toys for boys are supposed to be exciting, but pack them full of marauding enemies and they become frightening!

Music
Ah... the restful qualities of music. But watch out for the instruments which fight back.

Circus
A holiday circus! What fun! Make it safe so that it is a joy – not a nightmare.

Wanna buy an alarm?

One thing in your favour is the fact that Mr Claus was sold a security system by a bit of a cowboy. The salesman neglected to mention that the cold tends to affect the electronic locks, causing them to break down if other sections of the factory are opened. If you manage to battle through a section and reach the exit, the next door's lock will open for you.

After completing one of the sections on a floor of the factory, you can then whiz up the stairs to the next section. However, the warehouses have a surprise in store. Dr Maybe has placed one of his evil creations in them, their sole purpose being to do you in. You must bash them up before leaving the room to open up the next floor.

Sonic boom

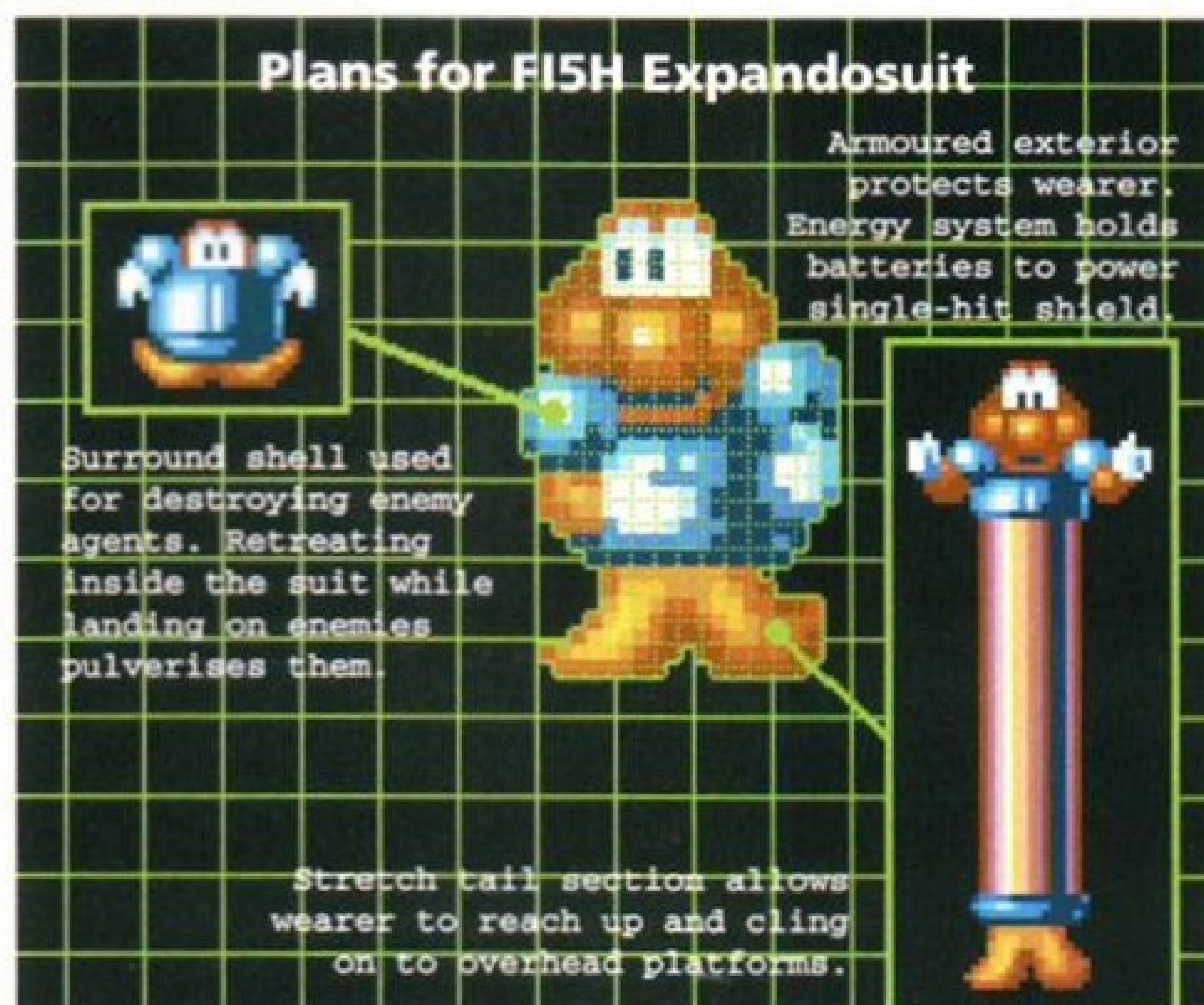
For the past few months, Amiga owners have been looking with envy at *Sonic the Hedgehog* on the Sega Megadrive, thinking that this kind of game would never appear on the Amiga. However, the original *James Pond* showed that extremely good console-style games could be done on machines other than Sega's and *Robocod* goes even further to bridging the console-computer gap.

The graphics are extremely bright and colourful, making the game one of the best looking platform romps to appear for quite some time. Back this up with some highly jolly tunes by Richard *'Magic Pockets'* Joseph and the game is an audio-visual treat. The presentation isn't the only good thing about *Robocod* though. The gameplay is addictive enough to keep any platform fan gripped for longer than is healthy, and there is enough variety to keep the going interesting for weeks. Even if you manage to reach the end sequence, the game is by no means completed. There are secret rooms, hidden sections and all manner of puzzles to keep you coming back for more again and again.

The gameplay is addictive enough to keep any platform fan gripped for longer than is healthy.

The Amiga version of Sonic has been mooted for a while, a fact which has had Amiga owners drooling. This is beside the point now, since *Robocod* is just as cute, just as fast, more colourful, bigger and perhaps most importantly, more fun than the blue spiky one. You no longer need to worry about saving up for a console – *Robocod* is here!

Maff Evans



Robocod
Millennium ■ £25.99

- Incredibly cute and colourful graphics capture the console feel perfectly.
- Massive levels take some exploring, and when you finish them there are plenty of secrets to find next time around.
- The action is fast and challenging enough to keep you playing for quite a while.
- One of the best cutesy platform games to ever appear on the Amiga.

AMIGA FORMAT Verdict **91%**

With winter now in full effect you may be thinking of getting your seedlings in the greenhouse and turning over the turf. Take a piece of advice though, don't play *Magic Garden* instead. If you're brave enough to face the rain and snow then you've enough courage to take on a very different style of game. *Magic Garden* isn't a horticulture simulation: it's unlike anything you've ever played.

Grobble is a naughty Gnome who has been banished to a rural garden by the Gnome King. He is imprisoned there until he's all growed up and responsible; which he can prove by making the dilapidated garden both beautiful and functional. The garden contains flower beds, a lawn, a vegetable patch, an old hollow tree, a fountain, a greenhouse, a garden shed and a well.

Out in the potting shed Grobble finds a whole range of things that Percy Thrower would have given his right arm for. But he'll have to watch that broken pane in the roof. In the winter that will let the cold flood in and ruin the special hothouse flowers that will look so lovely in the summer. If he repairs it though the it may just be a magic garden.



Magic Garden

Laughing gnome

Grobble is the sprite, that has to put right, this English country garden. Wandering about he looks like just the sort of jolly, chubby sort of gnome you'd be proud to have in the front garden. (Only if you're one of those weird people who think that a small concrete statue looks good – *Ed!*) He's controlled by either joystick or mouse, and can scurry anywhere in the garden. To access the various areas just move him there and up pops a close-in screen of the building or location.

Magic Garden is a test of time and object management. Grobble has a shoplifter's coat that's packed full of pockets, where he carries his garden-tending tools. To plant seeds for example, he needs a digging tool, seeds and to stand in the flower bed. By accessing his pockets (press fire) he can select which seeds to plant. Clicking on the 'use' icon starts Grobble planting, provided he's carrying the trowel. This takes time, though, and while the flowers are being prepared, the lawn may be going to waste, the fountain could be leaking or roof tiles could be falling from the shed.

One action has to be traded off against the other, to gradually bring the garden up to the Gnome King's standards. There are two ways of telling how well Grob is doing. First, and most immediate, is the food gauge. If Grobble isn't constantly fed he'll starve and die! A good garden is a working garden, so Grobble has to swiftly become self-sufficient and grow his nosh. Once this is under control it's time to worry about the garden's overall fitness – a percentage gauge at the base of the screen shows the garden's current status. The more Grobble does right, the higher the percentage goes and if it reaches 100 per cent, he's free and you've won. If it slips down to zero though, the Gnome King will try to fry Grobble with lightning bolts.



Grobble is out in his magic garden putting some flowers to bed. The flowers should look beautiful and make the Gnome King (whose eye is in the sky) real happy.

Down beneath the well is the home of the naughty elves, who keep trying to ruin the lawn. Catch one and then drop them back down here to keep them out of mischief.



Capability Grobble?

Gardening is always seen as a relaxing, therapeutic past time, but Grobble has to contend with the random elements that makes his life rather hectic. Weather is his primary concern. A forecast meter tells him when bad weather's on the way: this can ruin a good garden.

On top of this are the impish elves who sneak out to steal bits of the lawn and fish that escape from the pond for a float around the garden. Both must be caught and put back in their proper place if the garden's to be magic, not tragic. These add new twists to the game, forcing Grob to chase, sprite style, around the garden and the tunnels beneath the well.

Magic Garden has a strangely cute feel. Its individual nature is strong enough to stand and be counted as a major development on the *Sim City* management-style genre. Everything needs to be done at once but only one job can be done at a time. It forces players to grasp the core elements that influence the status of the garden, to maintain these bare necessities and then tweak the peripheral elements.

The graphic language this test uses is its strongest asset; a refreshing and boldly original approach. Using the gnome theme the management is cute without being twee, it's testing but doesn't feel it. The symbols: flowers, vegetables, lawn mowing, gnome catching etc interact logically if the humorous logic of the game is appreciated.

Magic Garden isn't an action game and can be slow especially when accessing pockets and different areas of the garden. These are not fatal flaws, but they do annoy. If you get into the game, and it does take a while to understand just why and what you have to do, it becomes rivetting. If you like your games to be instantly accessible stay away from the *Magic Garden*, but if you don't mind a little learning and you fancy something different then it's worth going through the gate for.

Trenton Webb

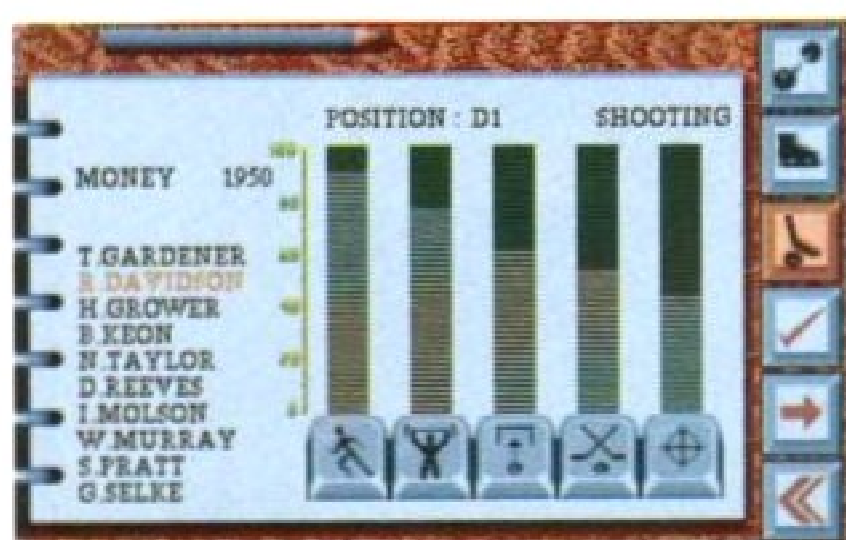
Magic Garden
Electronic Zoo ■ £25.99

- **Looks odd, sounds odd but plays well.**
- **Disk access between screens slows the game unnecessarily.**
- **This takes a while to learn but is well worth the effort.**
- **Mixes sprite style and icons effectively.**
- **A bravely original game that can grow and then grip you.**

Amiga Format Verdict 79%



PRESENTS... THE CHRISTMAS HITS LIST...



If you're not happy with aspects of your team's play, you can train them up. Each player's skills are shown in a bar-chart form. You can analyse these and tell them to concentrate on weights, skating or shooting.



The team line up and prepare for play with a similar look to that of American Football, but not quite the flair of Torville and Dean.

Oh dear, it's all gone horribly wrong. A little too much cross-checking (tripping up another player with your stick) and you'll discover that the entire team wants to argue the point with you. Here the two teams are enjoying a good old scrap, while the judges look on dispassionately.



Face-Off



The game's under way, your team has moved to their positions to prepare for what will undoubtedly be a bloody, stick-smashing, face-rearranging episode.

Ice hockey, on the surface, should be one of those gentle games where you skate about, happily knocking a little rubber disc from one end of the rink to the other, trying to score. Then off to the showers for a wash and a sing-song with your team. In real-life however, it's one of the most brutal sports on the planet, second only to white-water bare-knuckle seal clubbing. So, when an ice-hockey commentator says there's a face-off in the corner, you can never tell whether he's referring to a standard one-to-one for the puck or the gooey mess that was once a player's face before he was pushed into the plastic walling by the opposing team.

Sheer brutality?

It's endearing then, that Krisalis have tried to simulate what is possibly the most important ingredient of an ice hockey match: the violence. You see in this game, you can trip up the opposition, brain them a few times against the wall and even involve yourself in a mass ruck on the ice, with all the members of both sides joining in.

Such attention to detail in this simulation doesn't just stop at the punch-ups though. Here we have a thoughtful little sim which is easy enough to find your way around and to get into. But this is due to the fact that the game includes both management planning and match sections.

If all you want to do is collar your best mate, thrust a joystick rudely into his sweaty palm and give him a good hard thrashing at hockey (like you do), then you can skip the management section and head straight for the rink. Game parameters can be set: having the sound on or off, turning the ice-marks (made by the players) off, setting the skill level or (best of all) getting rid of the referee, thus enabling you to engage in some particularly bloody ice carnage.

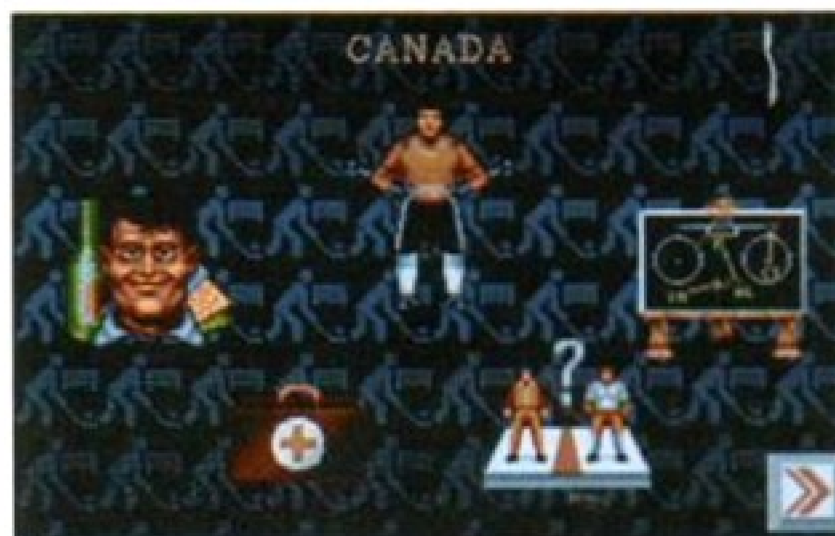
It's a game of four quarters

Up to four players can join in on the management section of the game. You can either have a completely hands-off approach, merely training the team or, if you wish, try participating in the games as well. The former just shows the score after the end of each period and then drops you back into the management screen.

Fixtures involving human players can be highlighted by clicking on the relevant icon. Clicking again on one of the highlighted games will result in that match taking place. The team statistics can be displayed showing each player's peculiar skills, a doctor can be called in (you'll use this one a fair bit), the players can be treated to a night out; ranging from a mega-expensive nosh-up to a cheap-skate curry and rice for 14, or finally the players can be trained. This training option enables you to analyse each player's strengths and weaknesses and give them ice, weights or sticks training where appropriate.

The matches are a lot of fun. The team skates out onto the rink and the ref plonks the puck down in the middle of the ice, you then hit the fire-button as soon as the word 'GO' appears and you either win or lose possession of the puck. The idea of course is to get the puck into the other side's minimalist net, preferably with the same number of teeth you skated out onto the ice with.

On the management screen you can lick your players into shape. Matches can be selected, players can be trained, statistics viewed, or you can treat them to a night out. The team can be selected and told which tactics to use.



Over here son, in my head

To pass the puck you simply hold down the fire-button in the appropriate direction and to shoot you quickly click the fire-button. To get the puck off another player you simply skate over him; you're success depends entirely on that particular player's puck skills. If you cross check another player (tripping him up) then a fight may or may not break out, which causes every player to congregate en masse and try and finish the game in a much more straightforward manner.

Face-Off is a pleasing simulation. A lot of attention has been paid to getting the feel of the game right, including the inertia of ice. The icon screens are easy to use and not at all fiddly. The whole game has a professional feel to it, which is bound to appeal to strategists and face-mashers alike.

Andy Hutchinson

Face-Off
Krisalis ■ £25.99

- A competent, fun, hockey simulation.
- Pleasing management section with large functional icons.
- Two-player game is fast and competitive.
- Great attention to detail and high flexibility of games styles.
- Clear graphics, meaty samples and fast glitch free action.

Verdict 83%











LEANDER

Thanatos lurks in his lair, bathing in the power-giving life-force he is sucking from Princess Lucanna.

Princess Lucanna is dying: Imprisoned in the Sphere of Depletion her strength will soon be gone.

Meanwhile, Leander – Captain Of The Guards – kneels before his master seeking advice. He is told: *The princess is the balance between good and evil, if she dies, good dies and evil shall engulf the land.*

As Thanatos' power grows, the world succumbs to his evil grasp; Leander now has to face and conquer dangers beyond his darkest dreams before he can free the princess and save the land.

*You play the part of the Princess as she hangs around inside the Sphere Of Depletion waiting for Leander to rescue her. Will he make it? Or will you spend the entire game doing nothing but having your life-force sucked?

Leander: Where heroes Sphere to tread!

*Psygnosis reserve the right to amend this storyline.

SEEING IS BELIEVING

Screen Shots from the Amiga Version

PSYGNOSIS
FREEPOST
LIVERPOOL L3 3AB
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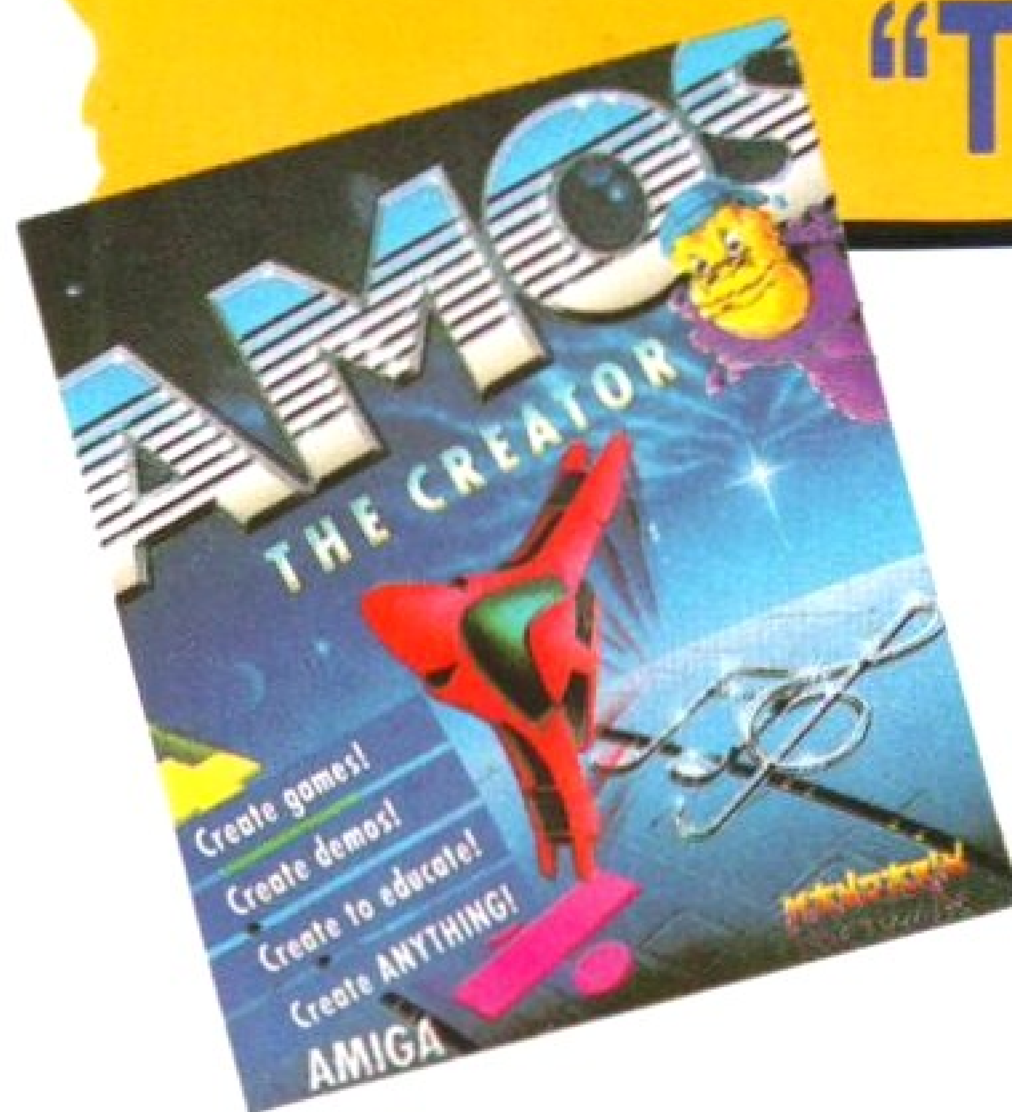






"The Amiga was made for AMOS"*

*K. Sumpter, AMOS user in Swindon

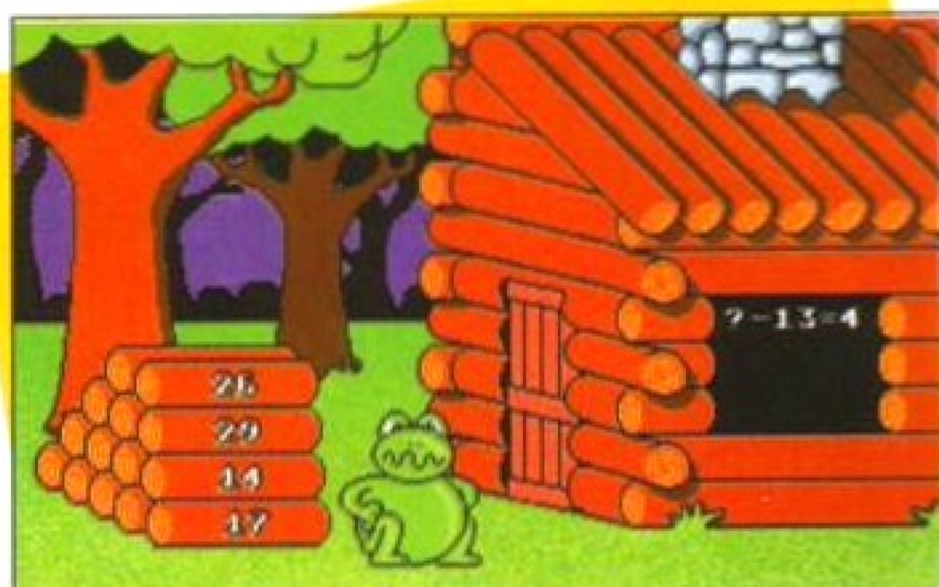


AMOS – The Creator is like nothing you've ever seen before on the Amiga. For the very first time you'll feel really in control of your computer, and able to harness its awesome power to impress yourself and your friends.

AMOS is not a false promise. When AMOS first came out, many Amiga users were sceptical that AMOS could do all that was promised – but these people are now ardent fans. There are now 45,000 AMOS users, and AMOS is still the biggest-selling productivity package for the Amiga, and can be found on the shelves of virtually every good software retailer.

It's so easy to create AMOS programs that almost every **public domain library** in this magazine now has AMOS titles in its collection. These include graphics demos, music demos, disc magazines, arcade-style games, puzzle games, databases, educational software – and lots more.

Many **commercial software packages** are also written in AMOS. In fact most educational publishers use AMOS, especially ourselves with the best-selling Fun School 3 and 4.



AMOS was the perfect choice to create Fun School 4 – the results are first class!

AMOS has also proved to be perfect for producing CDTV packages: The Complete Works of William Shakespeare, The Holy Bible, Mind Run I and II plus many others – all created using AMOS because of its versatility and ease of use.

What is AMOS?

AMOS is a powerful, easy-to-use programming language based around BASIC – the language which is taught in schools and colleges. AMOS contains more than 500 different English-like commands such as MUSIC, VOLUME, SAMPLE, GET FONT, ELLIPSE, RAINBOW, MENU BAR and CLOSE WORKBENCH – so you can create any result you want both quickly and easily.

AMOS comes with a clearly-written 300-page manual and more than 80 example programs. These will guide you towards creating your first program, making AMOS the ideal introduction to programming on your Amiga.

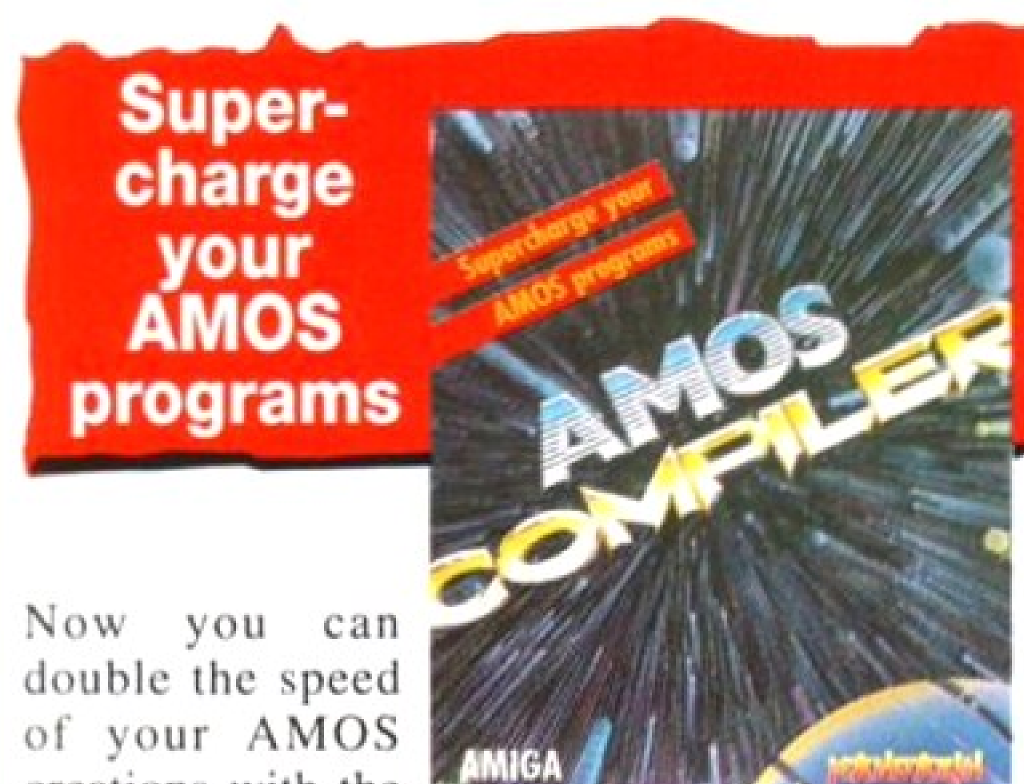
What AMOS owners have said:

"It's the best piece of software I've bought for the Amiga. Worth twice the price!"
– S Sweet, Herne Bay

"Without doubt the very best Basic available on the Amiga."
– Paul Feazey, Oxford

Unleash your creativity with AMOS – for just £49.99

Super-charge your AMOS programs



Now you can double the speed of your AMOS creations with the AMOS Compiler – in fact, some commands are up to five times faster! And using it couldn't be simpler – just two mouse clicks and you're away. The AMOS Compiler also includes a cruncher which will compress your programs to half their size – which has enabled AMOS users to get their work on magazine cover discs and earn them money.

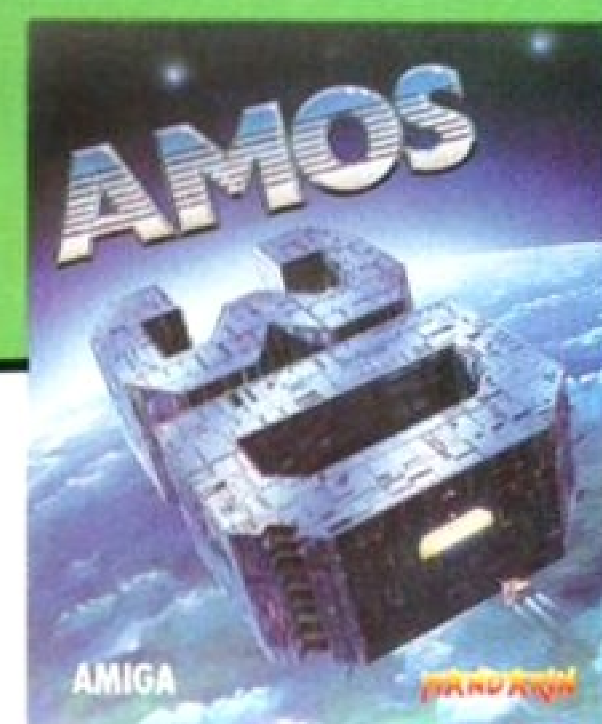


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"Compiling programs has never been so easy... Programs are turbocharged beyond recognition"
– Amiga Format

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AMOS 3D provides all the tools you need to create your very own 3D world.



The 3D Object Modeller gives you easy access to the world of virtual reality

"After a little more than a few hours you should be churning out 3D demos at a blistering rate"
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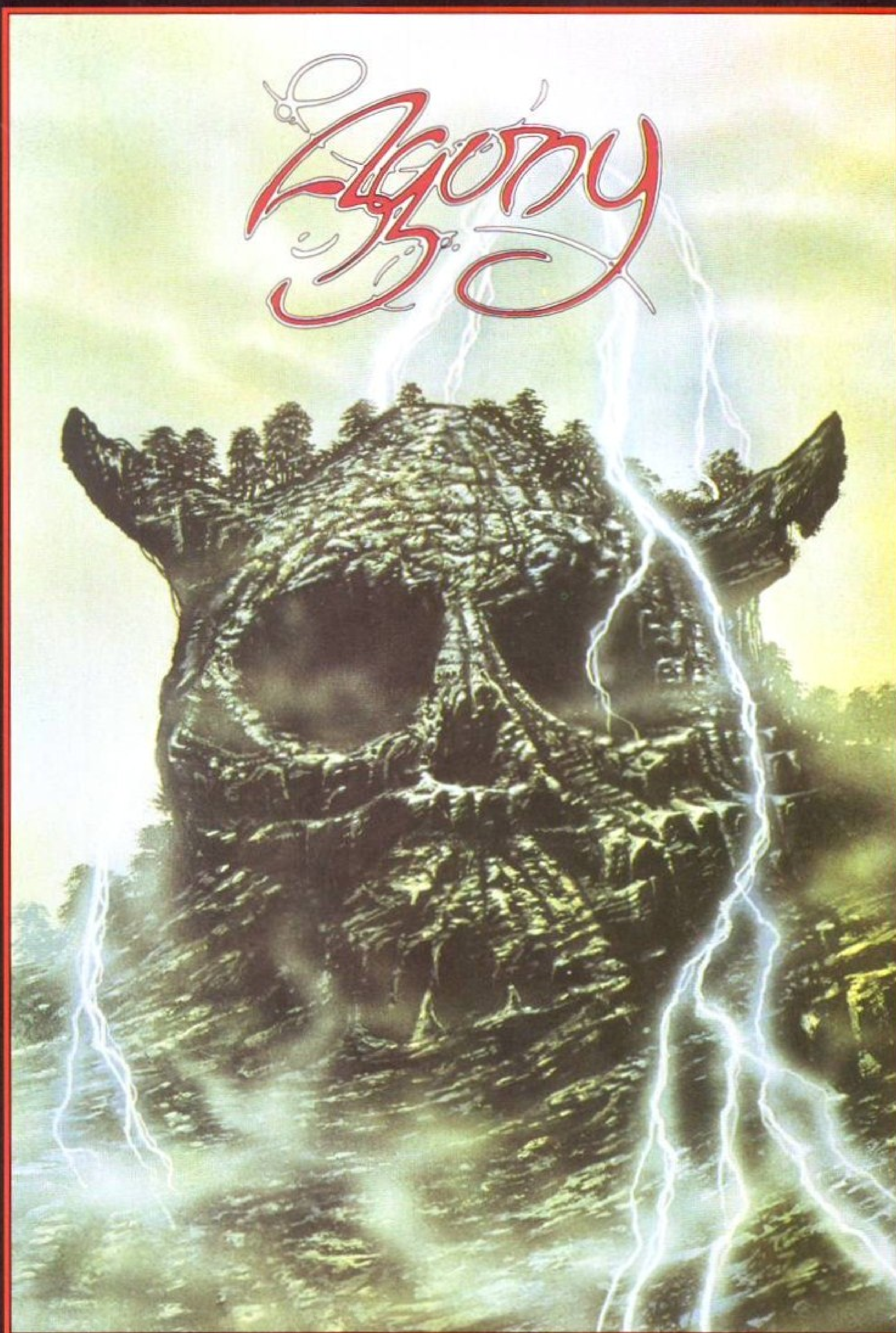
AMOS Club
1 Lower Moor, Whiddon Valley, Barnstaple, North Devon EX32 8NW
Bi-monthly newsletter and technical support for a yearly membership fee.

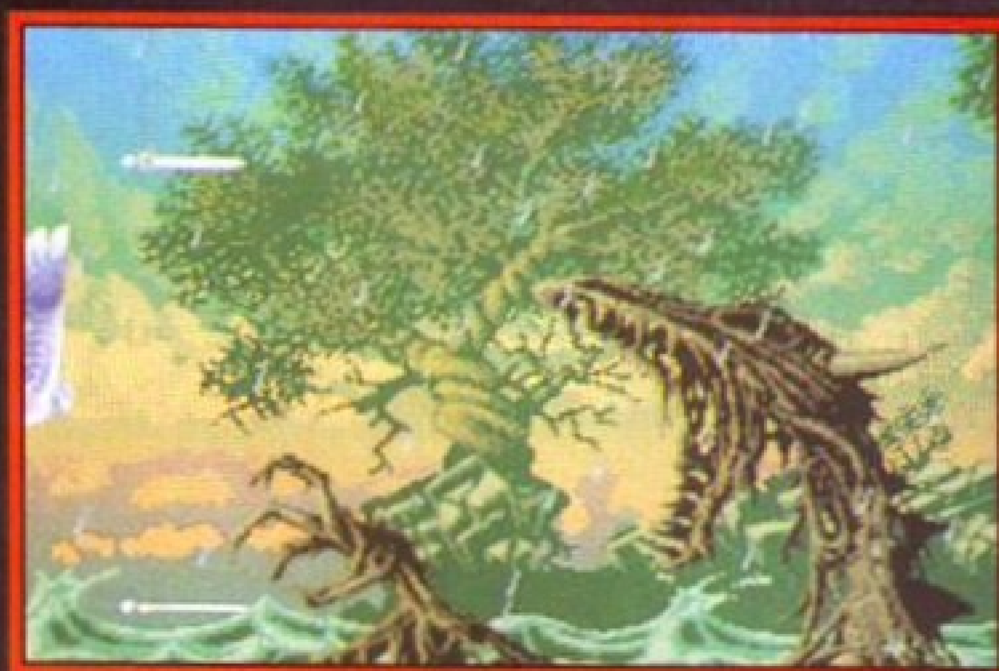
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More than 300 AMOS PD discs are available. Ring for a catalogue.

Creditcard order hotline – Tel. 051-357 2961. Alternatively send a cheque with your choice of products clearly indicated to Europress Direct, FREEPOST, Ellesmere Port, South Wirral L65 3EB.

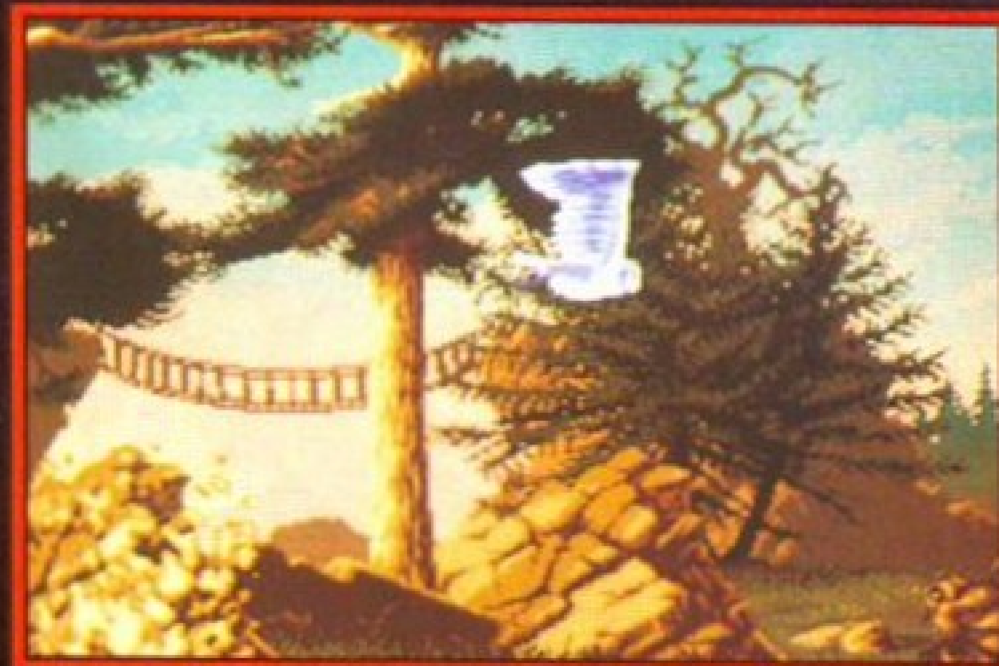
Europa House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield, Cheshire SK10 4NP. Telephone: 0625 859333

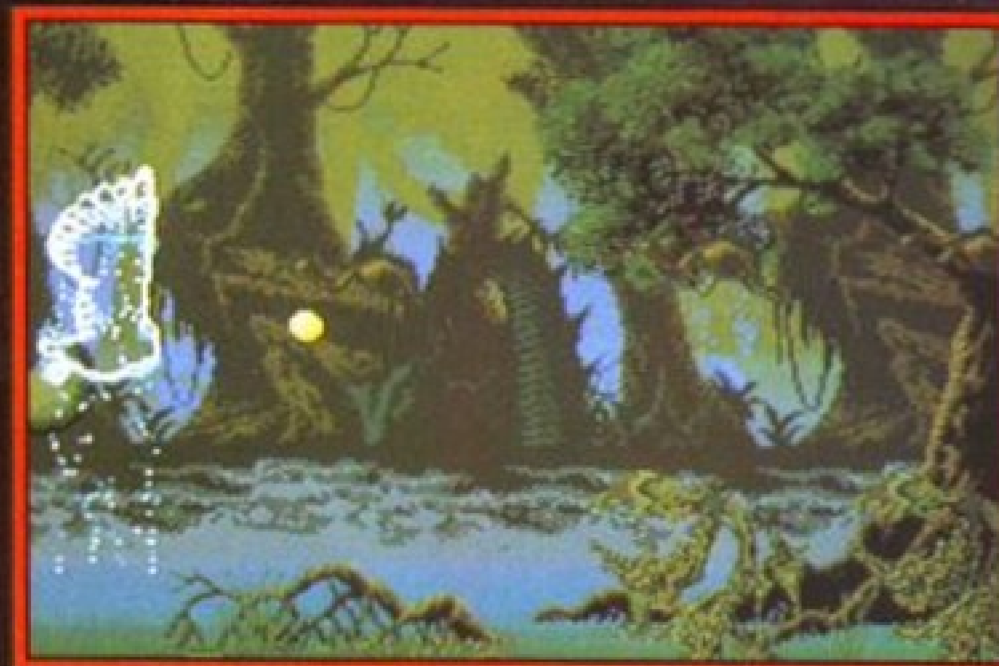
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AGONY

Pit your magical powers against an equal but opposite mystical force. Use your sorcery and fighting skills to battle through six graphically – excellent levels, each infested with hordes of beautifully-animated conjured-up creatures.

Pick up potions and spells to help your valiant struggle to find the secret of Cosmic Strength.

Experience four layers of incredibly-smooth parallax scrolling, animated backdrops, a massive play area, hundreds of on-screen colours, unbelievable gameplay and an exorbitant sound track all expertly mixed together and skilfully cast to bring you a spellbinding brew of computer gaming action.

Experience Agony with no pain!

SEEING IS BELIEVING

Screen Shots from the Amiga version.

PSYGNOSIS
FREEPOST
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"Sometimes I feel, I feel a little sad inside. When my baby mistreats me, I'll probably slap in this disk to make me feel better." That's the painful, contrived and very-probably-inevitable song-related pun out of the way, so on with the review. Titus present the game of the film: and it's an excellent licence.

Did you think nothing more could be done with platforms and ladders? Well think again. Add a stonking soundtrack, hysterical animation and some well-designed backgrounds that keep the pace up. It all adds up to a storming game that will delight all Jake 'n' Elwood fans, and charm the uninitiated. The characters are animated to individual perfection and you know from the outset that this game really sings the blues. Your instruments have been stolen. You have a concert to play tonight and you're in jail.



This shot illustrates one of the many different character animations: this time Jake inches his way along this wire fencing in true Spiderman-style.

The Blues Brothers



Stage five and Jake's jumping for joy. He holds onto his hat as he leaps, but he'd better keep a watch out for policemen.

There's only one thing to do: bust out of jail and search the city. One or two players now have to negotiate six levels of action, locate each hidden instrument and finally get to the concert hall. Each level is accompanied with a different soundtrack, gelling perfectly with the zany antics on-screen.

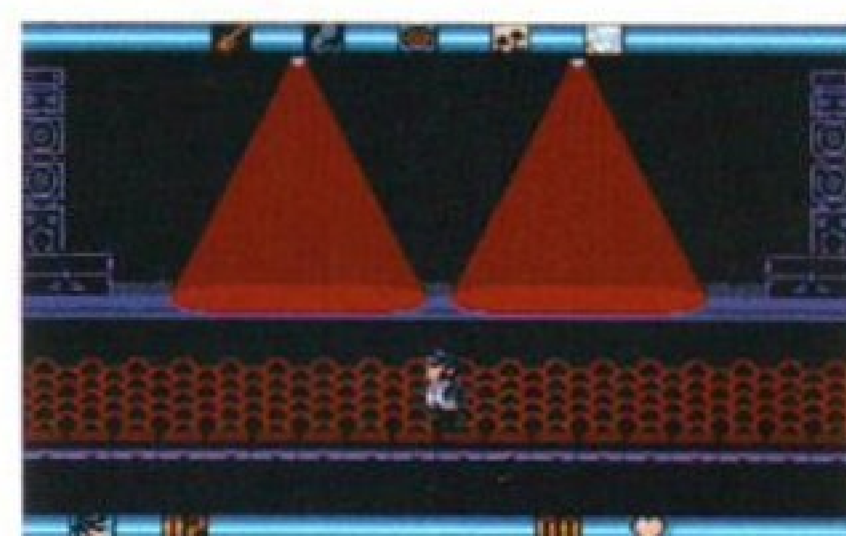
Respect them, just a little bit...

Jake and Elwood can't just go up and hit people. Instead they must jump over their enemies (surely *everyone* in the city can't be after them?) or pick up a crate, hold it aloft and chuck it at them. Thus the beat-em-up gameplay encompasses an element of strategy, because you must plan your route to coincide with potential weapons.

There are bonuses which can be found scattered around the platforms. Collect 100 records or pick-up some cool-looking shades and you've just won an extra life. A heart will restore you to full energy and a question-mark icon can do all *sorts* of strange things – the most annoying of which is to make Jake or Elwood groove on down for a few seconds, leaving one of them defenceless and vulnerable to attack. It's all down to luck…



Now it's Elwood's turn to strut his funky stuff. Collect 100 of those records and he's earned an extra life.



It's almost the end of the game. The Blues Brothers have managed to find all of their instruments (as shown at the top of the screen) and Jake's found the stage. But it's not quite over yet...

Keep those wagons rolling, rolling, rolling

Well those are the good points, now let's pick a few faults (but only a few). A two-player game that allows both characters to groove on down simultaneously is a really great idea, but unfortunately it's poorly implemented. The screen-scrolling only follows player one, often leaving player number two helplessly off the screen. OK, so you've just got to stick together. Maybe this could add an extra element to the gameplay? Sorry, though, it doesn't work.

But that's it. Controlling Jake and Elwood at first feels uncomfortable, but you soon get the hang of it. The music is fantastic and adds to the game. The animation flows smoothly, as our heroes jump, crawl, dance, climb and even swim (in true *Man from Atlantis* fashion) their way through 300 or more screens and 25 different baddies. You've seen the movie, bought the soundtrack and been to the fancy-dress party. Now play the game?

Neil West

Brothers in arms

The first screen of the game and already you can tell you're in for a treat. Move the spotlight over the character you want to play. When the light comes on, Jake or Elwood groove on down. But place the other brother in the limelight and they relax. Are these guys laid back or what?



Jake does the infamous Blues Brothers' strut while Elwood picks fluff off his hat.



But now it's Elwood's chance to shine, so Jake gets on with reading his paper.

The Blues Brothers
Titus ■ £25.99

- You liked the film? OK, well you'll love the game.
- Smooth graphics, clever animation and wonderfully inventive scenery.
- Rock 'n' roll soundtrack
- Forget the two-player option. It would have been great, but unfortunately it just doesn't work

Amiga Format Verdict **86%**

You wouldn't have thought that the novelty of racing through glorious sunshine in a Ferrari Testerossa, with a beautiful blonde right by your side, would wear off that quickly. But this is the world of computer-games, not some boyish Utopian reality, so those far-sighted people at US Gold have wisely decided that the third in their series of *Outrun* titles would benefit from some gameplay overhaul.

The trusty Testerossa (low mileage and one careful owner: well maybe not) has been part-exchanged for a whole Bully's prize board of transport including a motorbike, a jet-ski, a speedboat, a Porsche 959 and a Ferrari F-40. The race is now run over seven rubber-burning stages including five European countries and two water stages. Oh yes, and there's a plot too…

Oh dear, now that was just down right careless. You've only just started and already you're kissing the tarmac of England's green and pleasant land.



Outrun Europa

You are secret agent Simeon Kurtz. You had a mission and you fluffed it. A homing device informs you that your chocked-to-the-gills-with-secrets briefcase is presently whizzing its way towards Dover on its inevitable journey towards Berlin. That's no problem, it will probably turn up in some second-hand shop soon enough (one for all you current-affairs fans out there), but your Ferrari F-40's been nicked as well.

HQ are angry, but you handily spot a motorbike with the keys left in the ignition. So off you go, hurtling towards Dover. This is stage one. Stage two is the English Channel, which you go bobbing over on a jet-ski. Stage three is a quick Porsche 959-propelled dash through the French countryside (overtaking Renault 5s) leading you to stage four: a quick detour into Spain. Stage five is a speedboat cruise around the Mediterranean, then it's into your F-40 for stage five: Italy, and lastly stage seven: Germany (overtaking VW Golfs). Unfortunately, the graphical variations between stages are merely token, and your driving technique needn't be tailored for each stage. Just keep your foot on the pedal and grit your teeth.

The English Channel was never like this. Yachts, lighthouses, tankers, barrels of waste and boulders are five more good reasons for the Channel Tunnel. Police helicopters and enemy speedboats attack you.





Into a Porsche 959 for a dash through France. Watch out for the rozzers, they'll do their very best to bust you, and you must do your best to avoid the enemy agents – this time in black Renault 5s.

Around the world in a Ferrari F-40

So is it any good? Well, as a high-tension spy thriller *Outrun Europa* is a very good driving game. Yes, the plot is completely superfluous, it doesn't even make a half-hearted attempt to create a *Chase-HQ* kind of atmosphere. But then it's the high-speed death-defying driving element that's the important bit.

Without a doubt, *Europa* is by far the best of the trilogy. The action is much faster and the graphics are smoother. The various scenarios rush past at break-neck speed as the road rolls, twists, climbs and plummets in front of you. The graphically-impressive water levels include a shoot-em-up element while bollards, buoys, rocks, yachts, etc all combine well to create congestion that the M25 would be proud of. And although they cannot be entirely dismissed as merely a token novelty gesture, they are largely awkward and detract from the rest of the game.

Europa comes in as quite expensive at £25, especially when you compare it to some of the budget drive-em-ups that are around at the moment. But for die-hard fans of the genre it just manages to hold its head up against the likes of the full-price *Lotus Turbo II* or *Indy 500*. If you completed the original, enjoyed its turbo-charged sequel and are just itching for plenty more of the same then you probably won't be disappointed.

Neil West

AND ALL BECAUSE… SOME BLEEDING JOYRIDER'S NICKED YOUR FERRARI

You are secret agent Simeon Kurtz chasing your stolen briefcase through seven stages. In between each stage, an animated sequence shows Kurtz pinching another unsuspecting vehicle. Don't try this at home kids.



Simeon gets his motorbike running and heads out on the London-to-Dover highway.



Dumping the jetski at Calais, secret-agent Kurtz nabs himself a particularly tasteful yellow Porsche.

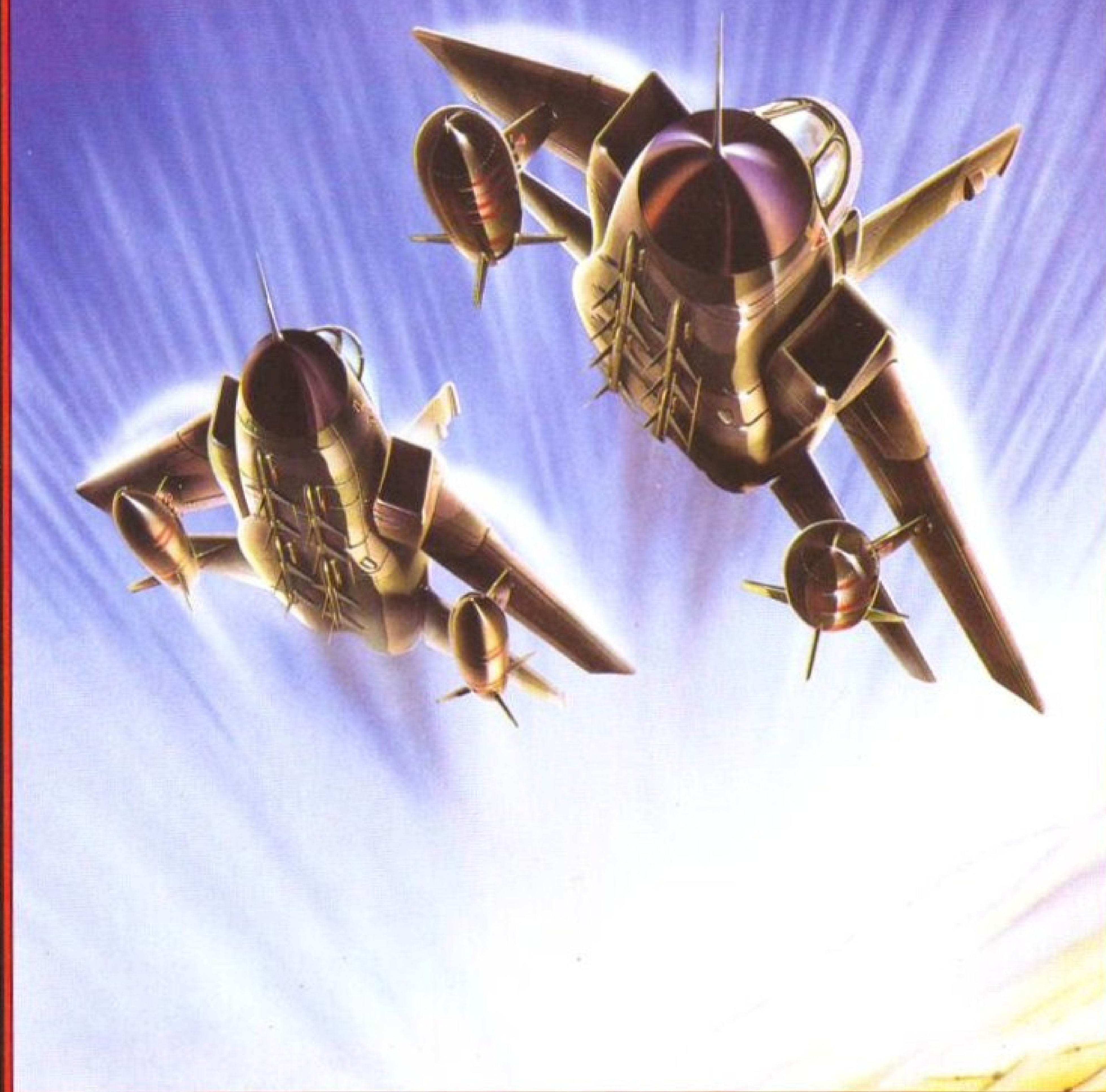


Fail to make the checkpoint in time and you get busted. And the moral of this story? Crime doesn't pay!

Outrun Europa
US Gold ■ £24.95

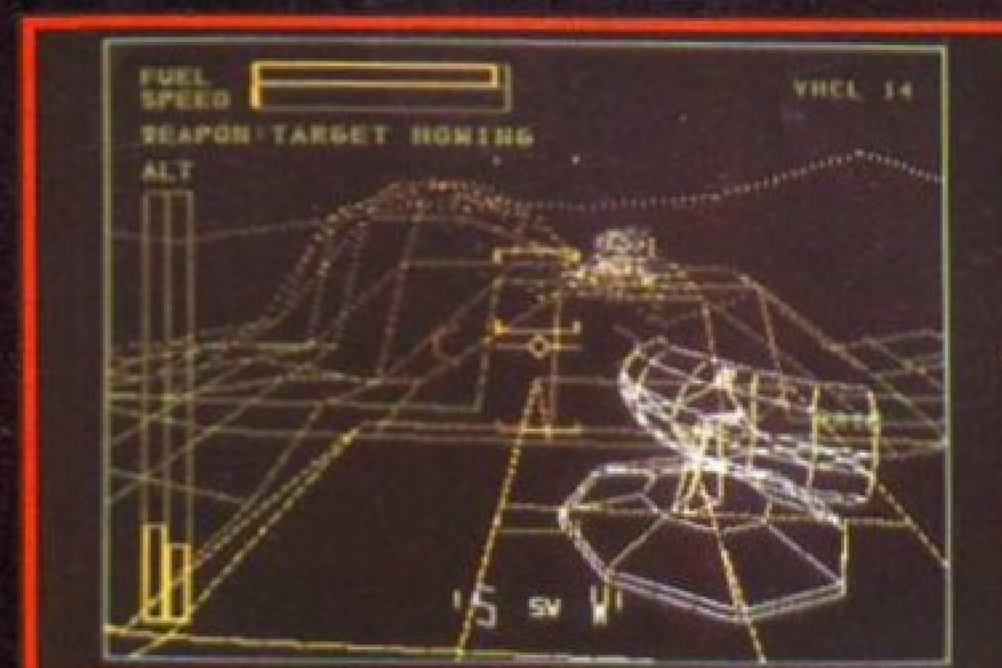
- Fast, smooth, colourful , great fun to play.
- Without doubt the best of the trilogy.
- Token plot gestures and differing scenarios could have been exploited further.
- Isn't it all just a bit dated? Well, maybe – maybe not.

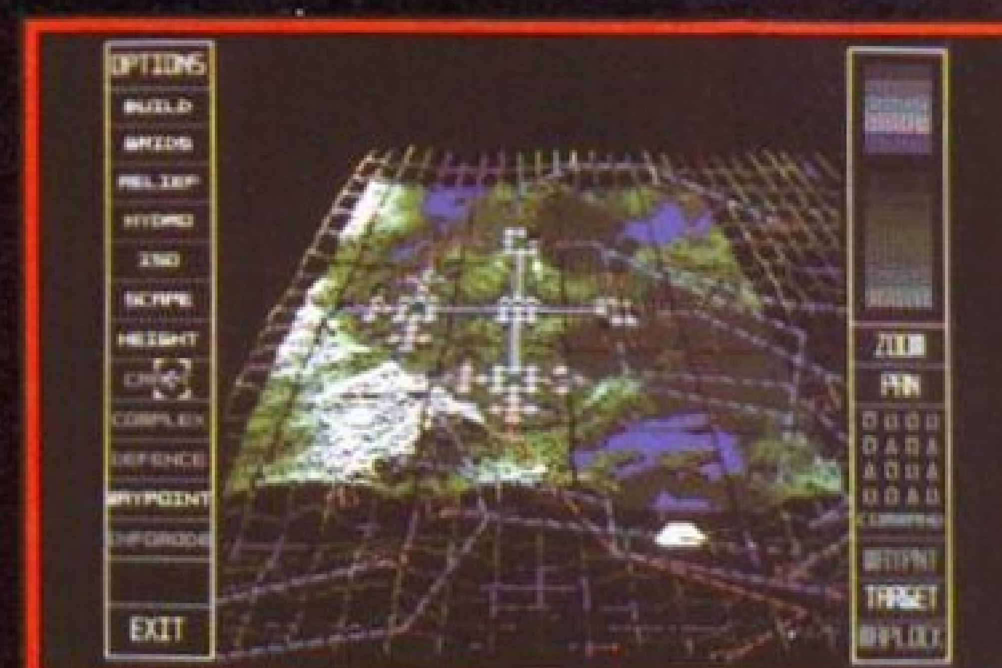
AMIGA FORMAT Verdict **78%**











AIR SUPPORT

It is the future; Armed warfare has advanced to such a dangerous stage as to render it too deadly to use. Conflict is now carried out in simulation only.

From your Command Centre you have control over a fleet of hi-tech vehicles. You will need to hone your skills as a pilot and strategist in tough training missions before you advance sufficiently to take on the enemy for real.

Utilising a unique Frac-Scape technique and featuring incredibly realistic virtual 3-D, Air Support breaks down the barrier between simulation and reality.

SEEING IS BELIEVING

Screen Shots from the Amiga Version

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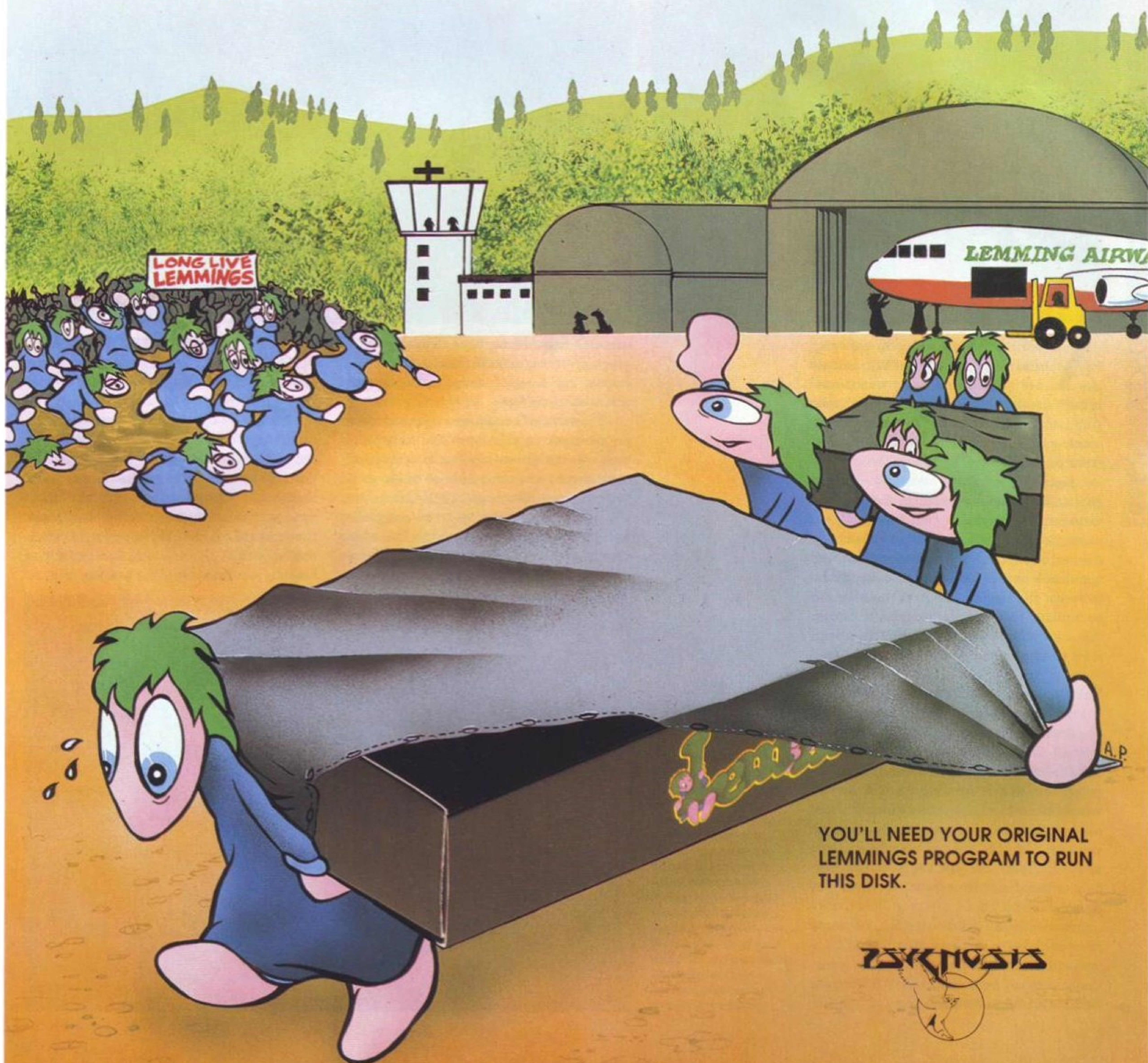


THE NO-HOLDS-BARRED SMASH GAME SHOW OF THE FUTURE TV

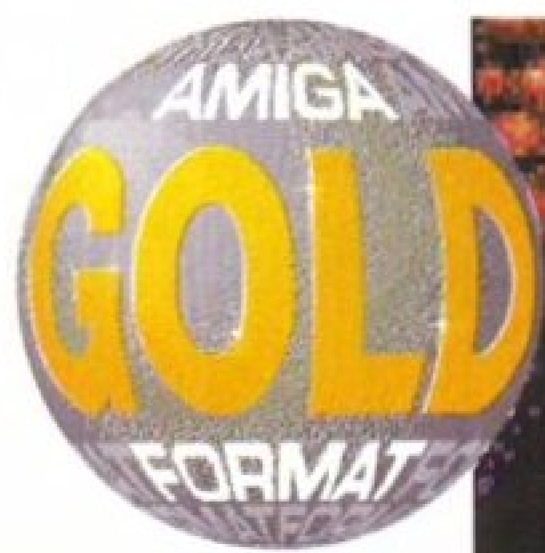


OH NO! MORE LEMMINGS!™

THE DATA DISK



The beat-em-up has finally grown up. But can fist fights stay the distance in contemporary Amiga entertainment environment?



First Samurai



The Seven Samurai! This series shows just some of the trials and tribulations that an everyday warrior of vengeance faces. First he has to dodge the big spikey thing, then the dragon's firey breath, leap down get the bell, climb down and then dodge another purple spike. At least there's a basket of health food at the end of the passage!



Excuse me driver! The scrolling train level is almost over, as long as the samurai kills that guy in the cabin. He's halfway through the game, the worst is yet to come!

After years of wandering the gameplay wilderness, this oriental bash is leading the genre into the promised land. It fuses the essential adrenaline of punch outs with the cryptic puzzles and dexterity tests of arcade adventure to produce a game that will make your Amiga cry "hallelujah"!

Fighting games are normally shallow affairs; heavy on the joystick and light on variation. Either you or your foe scrolls on screen, a brief mêlée ensues and somebody dies: what comes next is usually a surprise, but there's room for some genuinely tense moments and frantic stick work – which can be thrilling. *First Samurai* manages to capture that same head-to-head battle feel, but sustain it for 10 long levels.

Lone wolf

A lone samurai is on the trail of a time-travelling demon that destroyed his village. Now the samurai warrior is planning to return the compliment. Luckily he's being helped by the village wizard and whenever the first samurai wants help, all he has to do is ring a ceremonial bell. That's all you know and this is where you take over. The samurai's been catapulted forward in time, the joystick is in port two, he's unarmed and three bats are winging in from the right.

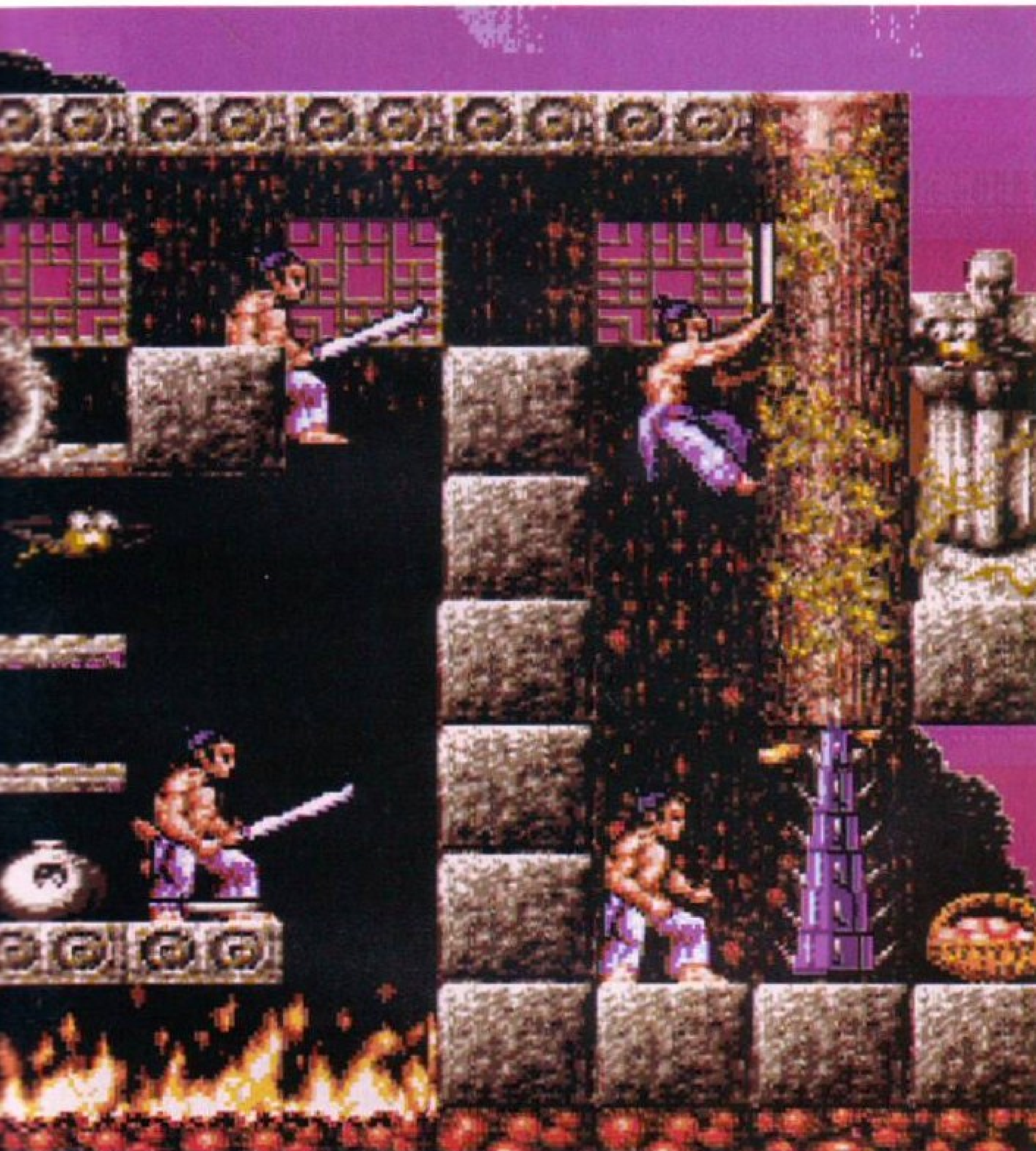
Run or fight? It's the question that leaps into your mind as the bats close in, and it's a question which permeates the entire game. Can you thrash these creatures? Will the gain justify the risk? Do they guard a specific treasure? Every encounter is dogged by these nagging doubts, and the tension they create ensures that *Samurai* retains its edge-of-the-seat, beat-em-up feel.

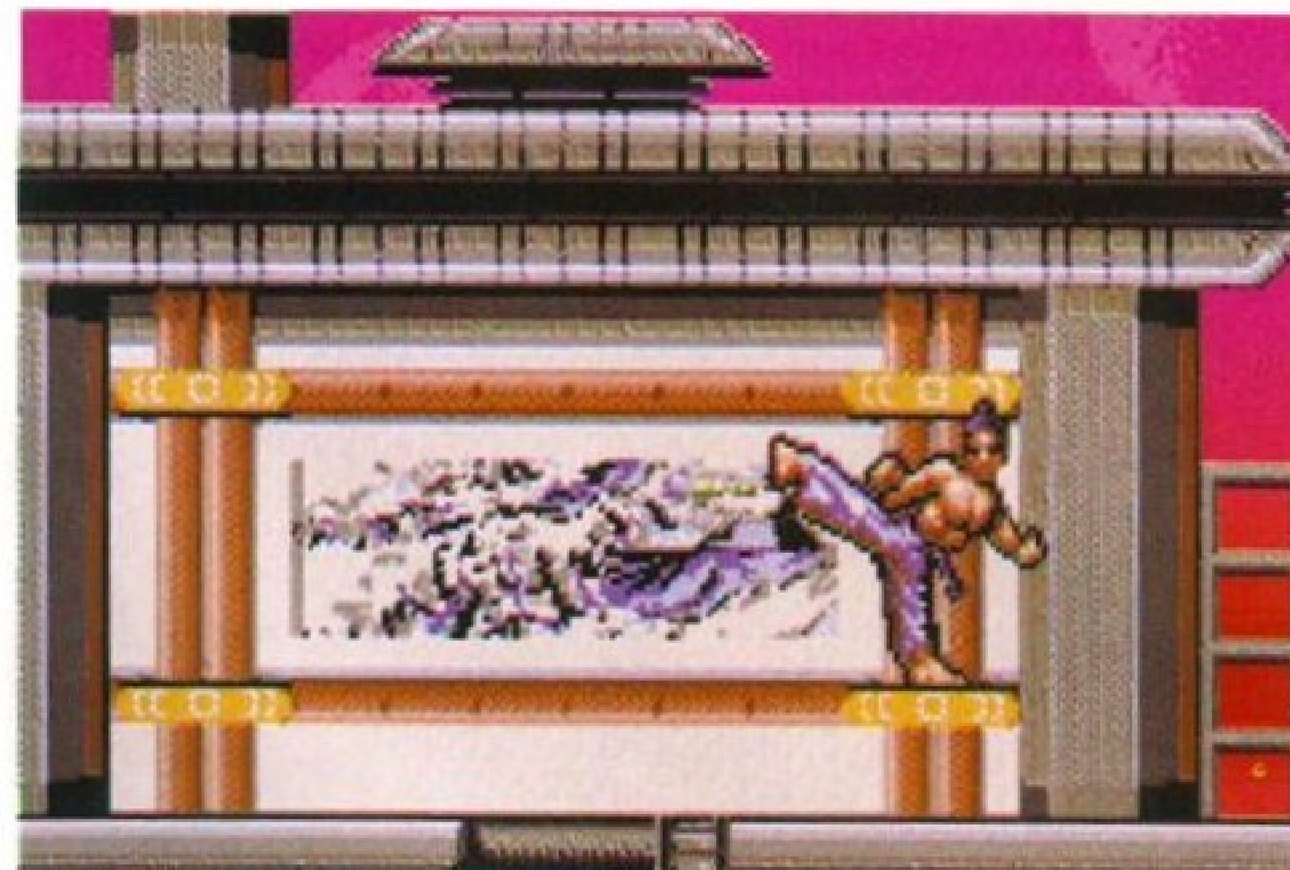
The samurai's status area reveals his five key concerns: an arm shows his health and a katana sword shows how much courage the boy's earned. On either side of the score sit two possession slots, one for bells and one for power-ups. Each has to be continually watched if you're to thrive and prosper. Lose your health and it's game over; killing beasts boosts courage but taking hits reduces it. Get the samurai's courage over 50 per cent and a sword flashes in his hand, let it below the magic half and it disappears in a shower of stars. Very pretty, but bad news in a battle.

The power-up slots make bonus management tough, because only a maximum of one bell and one bonus weapon can be held at a time. Is an axe or protective drones more important? What's more useful the lamp revealing hidden bonuses or the long-range fire-power of daggers? It's important to have a bell on you at all times too, because if you haven't, the wizard can't give you any help.



Futuristic Japan will be a wonderful high tech city full of everything a person could want: demon lords in penthouse apartments, small helicopters that attack everybody, thugs around every corner and purple people! So the situation is not ideal but it does give our Sam a chance to kill people in very large numbers.





Out for kicks. The samurai celebrates on reaching level 10, the home of the demon he is searching for. Unfortunately this posing session is the only break he'll have from here on in, as the going gets tough.



Dragon Ninja! Down in the sewer station at midnight, the samurai foolishly wakes up a large purple dragon. The dragon wants to fry him but Sammy has other ideas – like not being fried!

Fist of fury

The game's primary motive is to reach the demon who dwells on level 10. Clearing each level to reach him supplies a secondary, more immediate, motive. The obstacles come in many forms: monsters who must die, gaps that have to be jumped, walls that can be climbed and at least once-a-level hazards that only the wizard can clear, so you have to find a ceremonial bell to summon him. A set of special objects must be collected to destroy any end-of-level obstructions. All these factors must be satisfied while you keep the samurai alive and armed. An impressive set of priorities, these conflicting forces continually jostle for priority during play.

The other driving force, and *Samurai's* finest gameplay tweak, are the life pots. Littering the landscape of future Japan (or so Vivid Image will have us believe) are urns which can be invested with some of the samurai's courage. This depletes his own supply – making the loss of the sword more likely – but means that the game restarts from that point after dying. They also serve as a return point for teleport potions. This energy trade off is risky, but offers limited control of 'random' events. The ability to manipulate First Samurai, making it surrender the bonuses you want, gives it a friendly edge. Some beasts regenerate and some stay dead; so if you're in need of a few pints of courage seek a weak regenerative monster. Certain food bonuses reappear every time you leave the screen, so taking a walk can earn you a second basket of food. If you're far from food, then push the score up by 5,000 and a bonus fruit appears. Once you know the game, the rules can be bent, to give the samurai a chance of arriving at level 10 in fine fighting form.



Even ancient Japanese warriors have to get around. So samurai has to try and hitch a lift on a passing train. Isn't public transport bad though, they're always late, filled with thugs and the buffet is between cars in a basket you have to cut open yourself.

Enter the dragon

First Samurai starts as a beat-em-up and then adds more styles to the mix. It keeps its beat-em-up feel, and the high-tension feel of going in close to kill folk, by virtue of the precise combat controls. Real sword stroking skills can be developed and is encouraged. Certain strokes do more damage, so these have to be learned and used when fighting tougher opponents. *First Samurai* expects powerful sword moves so if you don't learn quickly your progress will be halted. Fortunately the hero has a weighty feel that makes the Samurai very controllable, especially in jumps and fights. This is where *First Samurai's* heart lies, a test of joystick speed, thought and skill.

The feel of the game is just right, it's as if it was put together by folk who really play games. The rough edges have been smoothed

Continued overleaf



Burger time! Just what a health conscious, super-fit, mass killer needs: a Big Mac, a bottle of undiluted Ribena and a few cans of Coke. Still they're the kind of snacks you can eat between meals.



First Samurai's exemplary graphics throw up some excellent surprises. Look, there's samurai's great uncle sword slasher. There's no time to admire the art, there's people to kill.



These life guard chaps are silly. Instead of attacking they puff their chests out and roar! Quite why is beyond the wit of man, but it makes them easy targets for a swift sword slice.

down and a sense of player justice pervades: each guardian's death is followed by a shower of bonuses, so you always go to the next level at full strength; thrown weapons can be hit back at the thrower. Fires will damage both you and the monsters, again fostering a sense of justice, and as the number of special items collected is often vital, pressing 'B' tallies your progress to date. Most importantly if you try to use a bell and it has no effect, it's returned to you not destroyed.

Game of death

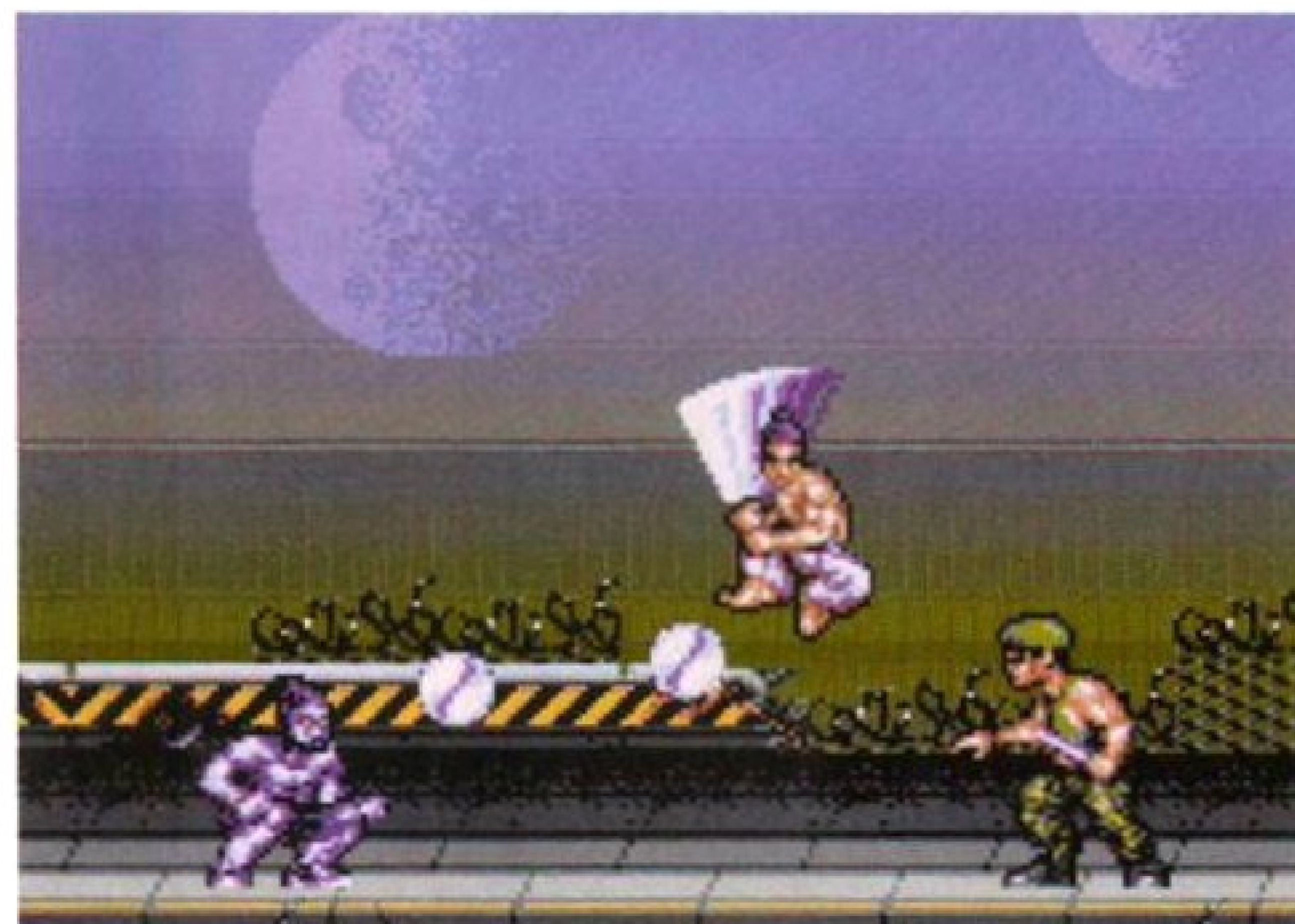
First Samurai conducts itself with honour on the effects' battlefield. The lurid, often animated, backgrounds are constructed to catch the eye and imagination. Cosmetic touches have been added, but where they won't affect the game, which plays up the neo-realistic style of the background. When walking for example, the samurai's feet can be hidden behind the lip of a platform. Gloss loses out to gameplay though, whenever the interests conflict: the perfect compromise.

The sprites use their stage well, animating with a human edge. Their composite nature (ie the head is a separate sprite to the body) and it allows movement to flow, not flick. The warrior's head snaps as blows are delivered, the head follows the torso.

Orchestral music adds a sense of quality, there's an automatic association. The use of such samples in *Samurai* is inspired: violin riffs accompany hits, hallelujahs herald liberated treasure and a brief burst of a string concerto signify a bell's been collected. Any classical samples would have been good but this particular selection adds a wry, satirical tone to the proceedings: an aural reminder not to take life too seriously.

First Samurai's only effect problem is the log jam of samples that follow the death of an end-of-level bad guy. Down from heaven rains chests, food and bonuses but cutting them all open creates a choral cacophony. But, then you have done something worth shouting about and the brief snatches of 'ha, hal, ha, hal' do rather match any attempts to catch your breath after the battle.

Samurai is fair. If an enemy attacks with a thrown weapon then it's logical to assume that these weapons can be hit back to hurt them too. Using the sword as a baseball bat is fun to return the favours the ninjas lavish on him.



The big boss

It's big, real big. Levels one-to-four concentrate on rural Japan, gradually introducing more core elements to the beat-em-up theme. Teleports, wizards magic, guts and good luck will see you to the train level. This sideways scroller stresses fighting above finesse and sees you into an urban nightmare. Three levels of street thugs and sewers twist the brain further sharpening the gameplay skills learned by level four. The final two stages take you to the Demon's penthouse and a final showdown, where you're expected to have mastered every trick in the book. Each level is big enough to be daunting and each introduces a new twist, keeping the pace fast and the feeling fresh.

For all its hugeness *First Samurai* is finishable, at least in the straight ahead Banzai sort of way. If you want to work on collecting every bonus on every stage first time out, it's odds on you'll get stuffed. But once finished speedily, it invites a second play just so that the guy is at his most powerful where it matters – now you know where it matters – and he doesn't stumble headlong into real trouble.

First Samurai reinvents the beat-em-up by adding deeper gameplay, but retains that tense face-to-face fight feel.

First Samurai reinvents the beat-em-up genre, by adding deeper gameplay, but retaining that tense face-to-face fight feel. It looks stunning, sounds intriguing, plays fair and pushes your stick control to the limits. You want to get to the end, and you have every chance of getting there, eventually. Laden with subtle gameplay tricks and stunning effects it's everything an Amiga game should be – and more besides. Hallelujah!

Trenton Webb

First Samurai
Image Works ■ £25.99

- Awesome effects that catch the eye as well as the imagination.
- Huge but finishable arcade adventure.
- No waits for loading or disk access at all!
- The tense beat-em-up feel is sustained for 10 huge levels!
- Gameplay, good coding and gloss. The total arcade package in one game.

AMIGA FORMAT Verdict **91%**

WANTED

BRAVE ADVENTURERS

NO PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE NECESSARY

If you've ever pictured yourself as a Brave Adventurer but have been put off by the complexity of Role Playing Adventures this is the game for you.

Shadow Sorcerer has all the excitement and intrigue of AD&D™'s more complex adventures and also features the following "gamer friendly" innovations:

Shadow Sorcerer

- *100% "point 'n' click" icon control (no laborious typing).*
- *3D isometric play area giving you more control on the playing environment.*
- *Control up to 4 characters in a life or death struggle against evil.*
- *Hexagonal grid map aids strategic planning.*
- *Combat action adventure.*

This new concept in role playing adventures means that in minutes you could be confronting the Shadow Sorcerer, the down side is that within minutes you could also be dead!!



Screen shots are only intended to be illustrative of the game play and not the screen graphics which vary considerably between different formats in quality and appearance and are subject to the computers specifications.



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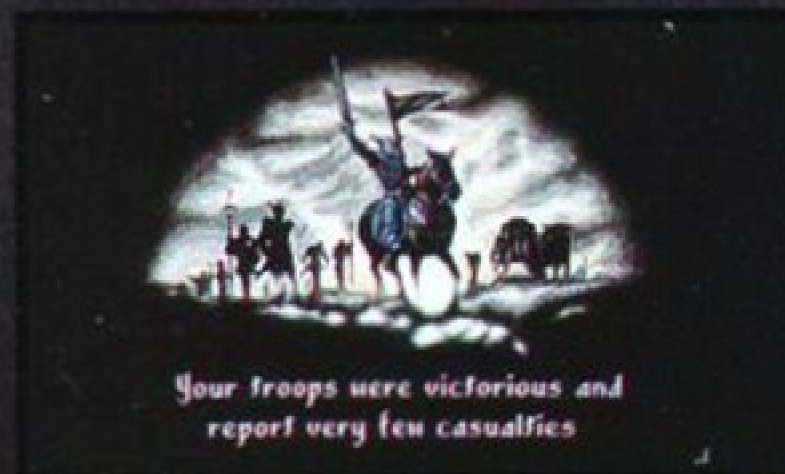
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~Six distinct humanoid races

The last word in arcade strategy.



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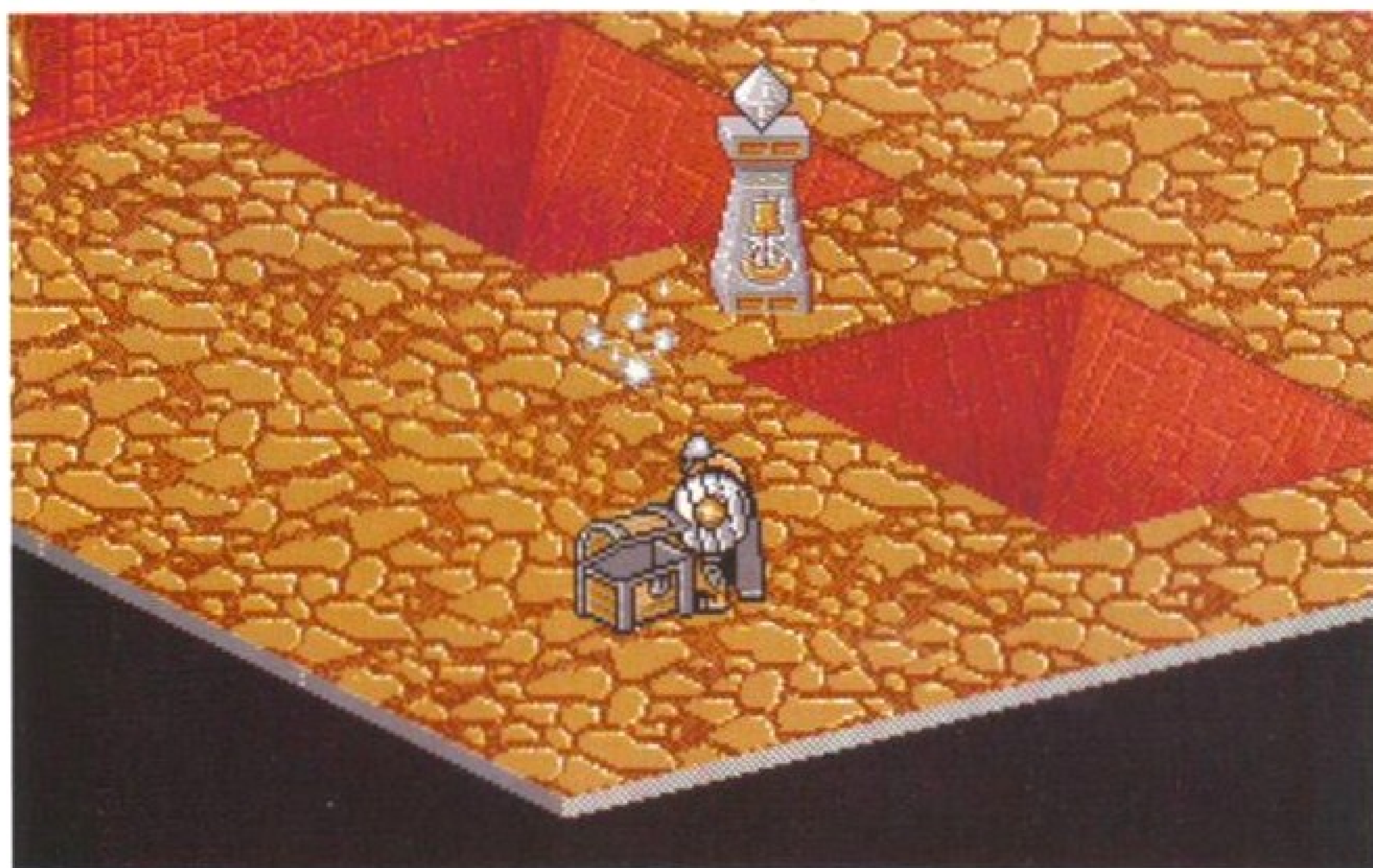
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Heimdall

A good role-playing game with cartoon quality graphics? Core Design and programmers Eight Day cannot be serious, but they are...

Role-playing games have had a good year, finally gaining the respect they've long deserved. Such success has seen the genre develop at a dazzling rate, with increasingly sophisticated game systems sporting ever-more impressive effects. *Heimdall* is the most eloquent graphic RPG ever, but is it just *Dragon's Lair* with dice?

Heimdall retells the Viking legend of Ragnarok: the Norse god's final battle against evil. The top gods' weapons (Thor, Frey and Odin) have been half-inched and hidden in the worlds of men, giants and gods respectively. An ancient code prohibits the three deities from leaving Valhalla to collect them personally, so they create the child Heimdall to recover the kit on their behalf. If the lad makes good then the gods will triumph in battle, but if he messes up...



Using a scroll of 'Disarm Traps' Heimdall and his two fellows (represented on screen by one character) have made their route safe. Now they have a chance to loot that rather tempting looking treasure chest. Just walking into it gives you the option to rip the thing open and liberate the contents. Highly illegal but highly profitable this Viking lark.

The Four Norsemen

The game begins with Heimdall still in short tunics and still has to prove his Viking mettle. Three traditional trials await him: axe throwing, greased pig catching and boat fighting. These are played as joystick driven sub-games and they decide the skills of Heimdall, your character, and the quality of volunteers who want in on the quest. With a minimum 50 per cent ability and 15 followers, a good performance does make life easier, but the game doesn't hang on the result. Once these trials are over, Heimdall selects five shipmates from the potential pool of 30 and sets sail to save the gods.



This is Heimdall's man of the world of men. He will have to lead his brave bunch to every island if he is to find Thor's hammer. It's no click-and-sail job, you have to make sure that the crew have enough food to last the journey and six days' worth of food is the maximum they can carry. The trouble is, the furthest islands are 12 days away!

The three worlds where the weapons are hidden are played as sequential maps. Thor's hammer, hidden in the realm of men, comes first. Ahead lays a sprawling nest of islands, each with either a clue to the hammer's location or the means to overcome its guardians. Successful recovery of the hammer involves solving a series of interwoven sub-quests, each of which makes the main objective just about feasible. Success in the world of men transports the ship to the world of giants where the hunt begins for Frey's spear.

The right profile

Heimdall is played via four different game screens. Travel between the different islands is conducted on a map, where the crew must be continually checked to see whether they're starving or not. The status screen, which controls the team's health and kit, is most prominent when three of the six-man crew explore any island. Here treasure and weapons have to be continually shuffled to ensure that maximum benefit is gained from each item collected. The exploration that uncovers these treasures uses an isometric sprite display and is the game's dominant perspective. Fights with the creatures who guard the treasure are conducted one on one, in an icon and window environment, as the three man squad's nominated warrior steps forward to trade blows.

Dry, bland descriptions of the game's mechanics don't do this sweet system any justice at all. This stunning cartoon world comes alive during play as forced changes of perspective are kept to an absolute minimum. The map is the least impressive of the bunch of screens, but then again it is the one that is least used. The inventory display effortlessly combines prettiness and practically – it's easy to use and understand.

The isometric world is *Heimdall's* main concern and while heavy on the style, it provides the instant addictive hook. It looks so good you just have to play. Battling with other tribes of people was just what the Vikings did best though, and combat is *Heimdall's* strongest characteristic too. Just as the isometric sprite nears an opponent the screen fades into the fight phase. The opponent appears in a window and the bar graphs show the landing party's current state of health. The four possible actions that you have available to you are – attack, spell, defend or run – they are offered as small icons which must then be mouse clicked on in sequence with the character's weapons and spells.

By watching the creature in the window, all you have to do is judge when precisely to strike and swiftly click the correct combination to initiate an attack. Your brave warrior's hands are seen flashing out to attempt the blow and the outcome is integrated in the monster's



Heimdall's artwork is stunning from beginning to end. This shot from the intro sequence tells how Odin created the world. From little island came all things Norse: Vikings, Valkyries, Volvos, the lot!



Combat is conducted through a window and icon system. Each blow has to be timed to catch the animated enemy while he's vulnerable. To strike you have to click on the attack type – axe, fist etc – and then on the appropriate action icon – attack, spell, defend or run – and it happens. It's a simple, effective and tense system.



The imagery screen gives Heimdall control of the magic and kit collected.



To prove himself Heimdall has to throw axes, fight on boats and catch greased pigs.

animation. Gunfight style, you have to wait for the precise moment to strike using the animation for a cue.

Diversion ahead

Heimdall starts slowly, but its glorious graphics are seductive enough to ensure continued play. Once the game's system's understood, then the graphic grace is fast forgotten in a swirl of tactical thought. The straightforward search for each god's weapon is continually obstructed by the crew's need to eat and Heimdall's mission to fulfil sub-quests. You have to decide what priority each gets and the numerous strategic calls make the task feel immense in small chunks.

The game's three huge levels means there's plenty to discover, puzzle over and fight for. The question of long-term interest though, is raised by the effectively simple interface between player and characters. Does this, though, restrict the scope of character actions and player skill? Well the downside of this is that Heimdall's magic is a simple scroll system where only spells that are actually found can be used, so the player has no choice; combat stresses mouse speed as much as weapon choice; and that the painfully small inventories requires continual feats of item juggling. Heimdall does ensure though, that the correct spell will be always be available to solve specific riddles and that the magic system is easily learned; that combat is tense stuff; and that traditional adventuring kleptomania is knocked firmly on the head because the inventories force forethought.

Party size is the one problem Heimdall can't escape. The gang of three's initial lack of power always puts them on the brink of disaster. Once experience is gained and the character's vital statistics improve so do their chances, but one slip at the outset is fatal. These early frustrations fight the graphics' instant appeal.

Wolf Child

Heimdall has all the trappings of a major RPG. It's deliberately light on the actual role-playing, but high on strategy. Choosing the right combination of characters and the right combination of islands is vital, but so is a slick combat performance. The fighting provides the tension and the quests supply the puzzles, while the graphics contribute with atmosphere.

Heimdall is the best looking role-playing game yet to grace an Amiga drive. The razor's edge balance of gameplay may prove too sharp for some, but anyone with a stubborn streak and sense of adventure is handsomely rewarded. Heimdall's perfect pictorial style is no gimmick, it's reinforced with a tight, tense, adventure that offers both strategy and action. Fundamentally a game of simple structure, its elegant design continually challenges both players and characters. Advocates from the RPG school of thought that good graphics equals bad beware, Heimdall is a gameplay wolf in a cartoon clothing.

Trenton Webb



A particularly not-very-nice spider, this is one of the tougher beasties that Heimdall and friends have to fight in the early stages.

Heimdall starts off slowly, but its glorious graphics are seductive enough to ensure continued play



Heimdall doesn't have to fight for everything in his life. If he makes it past the thug, then in that building is a shop which sells everything a budding Viking needs. Mind you, he has to have the money to buy stuff and for that he has to kill things...

Heimdall
Core Design ■ £30.99

- Three-level design with numerous sub-quests make this a big game.
- Small party size leaves low-level parties vulnerable.
- Tests mouse speed, joystick dexterity, strategic choice and management skills.
- Cartoon quality graphics are exquisite.
- A major RPG, excellent pics combined with tight gameplay.

Amiga Format Verdict **88%**

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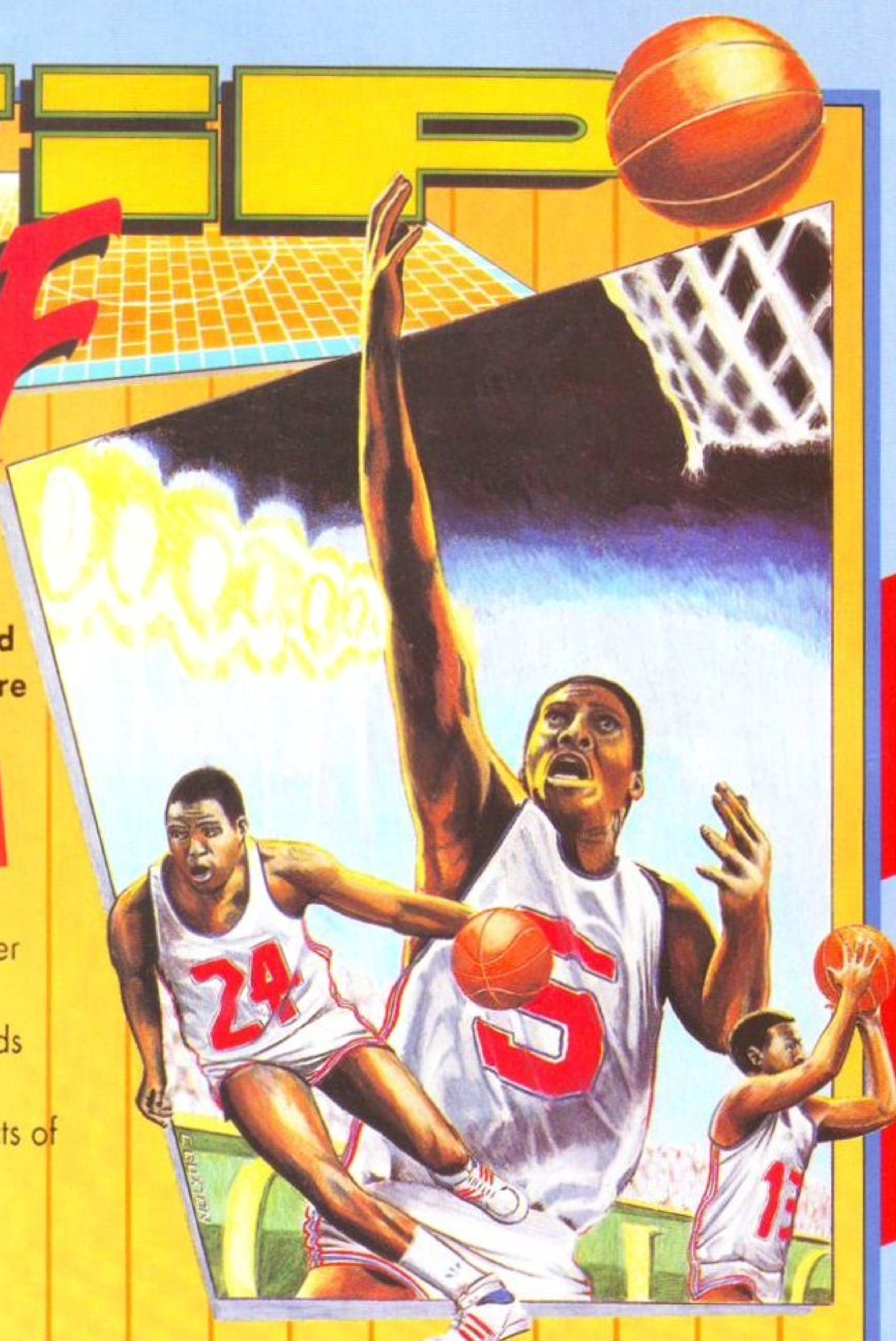
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Amiga Screenshot's Shown

EASY TO PLAY - HARD TO MASTER

Published by
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7 Millside Industrial Estate, Lawson Road, Dartford, Kent, DA1 5BH. Tel: 0322 292513/8 Fax: 0322 293422

Armakuni, the last ninja, has had a hard life. He's over 1,000 years old, all his friends have been murdered, he has twice tried to kill the evil Shogun Kunitoki – *Last Ninjas I* and *II* – and now he's reached the end of the line! Kunitoki has gone back in time and seized an ancient Ninja Temple. If he's not stopped, this sacrilegious assault will destroy ninjas forever and Armakuni will have to change his name from Last to Ex-!

The temple contains six symbolic chambers – earth, wind, water, fire, limbo and void – which represent the essential spirit of just about everything. Our man must find a way through each in turn if he wants to finally slap Kunitoki's wrist, ninja style! Armakuni is a changed man, he's no longer a pure bash-and-dash merchant. This time around he must collect and create tools as well as killing Kunitoki's henchmen. These tools can either be better weapons or 'keys' that unlock puzzles. Unfortunately few are found readily assembled and most must be built on the run.



The last ninja faces a lightning bolt throwing thing from the void. Each of the six temple chambers he explores contains its own blend of Shogun flunky. These guys are so tough they have to be killed twice before they eventually die. A Void the edges at all costs as one fatal slip can turn a last ninja into a past ninja!

Last Ninja III


Ninja gets a joystick test. Leaping between those platforms is tough but essential.


Ninja stealth-and-flick screen scroll conspires to hide our hero from view.


If you want to get ahead, get a head! Collect the kit to build one and earn an exit scroll.

Ninja's ever-faithful sword is found intact on level one, but later acquisitions can seem curious: two tree branches and a hanging basket's chain! The solution is provided when all three components are collected and they transform into a nunchuka. Empty bottles become bombs when gunpowder is gathered and gloves become climbing mitts when nails are discovered. Once assembled these 'keys' open new areas, but you then have to find where and how to use them!

Armakuni is not allowed to collect kit unmolested. Virtually every location houses a foe who attacks the moment the ninja appears on screen. No one-hit wonders, these boys absorb serious damage before falling. Once down they immediately begin to regain strength and eventually spring back into the fray. If they can be beaten a second time then they're dead for keys.

Red Dragon

Ninja, armed with porky weapons, always has the edge in combat, but it's an advantage that must be used cautiously. Killing a fist fighter with a sword is easy, but lacks honour – a critical factor. Below the game screen lives a dragon which shows Armakuni's Bushido level, which turns from red to green as honour is accrued. Fighting a sword-wielding foe with a sword earns honour, while using nunchukas on an unarmed foe saps Bushido power. And as each end-of-level guardian can only be beaten when the Bushido level's 100 per cent, honour underpins the entire game.

The wind howled (howl, howl, howl), the Ninja scowled (scowl, scowl, scowl) and in the distance an owl hooted (owl, owl, owl). An atmospheric intro scene kicks Last Ninja III into gear.

The graphic display keeps the isometric faith but both backgrounds and sprites are significantly better than any previous Ninja outing. The scenery is glitch free, allowing you to explore the entire background. The sprites are big, bright and animate with a sure style – speed blurs embellish sword strokes for example. Graphic quality is flagged from the first load with a slick scene-setting intro. The sound adds further gloss to the finish, aiding both atmosphere and gameplay.

Last Ninja blurs the generic boundaries between beat-em-ups, arcades and adventures. The resultant blend offers a wide range of pressures, puzzles and player tests. The difficulty level swiftly escalates after the first 'trainer' level, but it is beatable – if only just.

Death Jam

Ninja III exhibits certain problems on the loading speed and map design fronts. The low loading speed can be excused by ambition, but spending over a minute circumnavigating the high-score table via a death screen is irritating, because you want to get back to the fight!

The isometric design is littered with fatal edges, which punish sloppy joystick work. Yet when you switch between screens the ninja sprite is occasionally obscured from view by the background, leaving you guessing as to which moves are safe. If you are hidden, and next to a cliff, the results can be fatal.

The last word in System 3's long-running oriental saga is the best. The graphics, sound and varied gameplay ensures Armakuni goes out on a high note. Long disk access and the occasionally obscured hero mar the game, introducing frustrations to an already tough game, but these are not fatal flaws. A major challenge which the determined will enjoy, but the easily irritated should steer well clear.

Trenton Webb

Last Ninja III
System 3 ■ £25.99

- Six levels of role-playing style puzzles and arcade combat.
- Long wait between death and restart.
- Hero occasionally obscured by the backgrounds on restarts.
- Six tough levels with pass-word access.
- The *Last* is the best ninja by far.

Verdict 81%

5 GAME PACK

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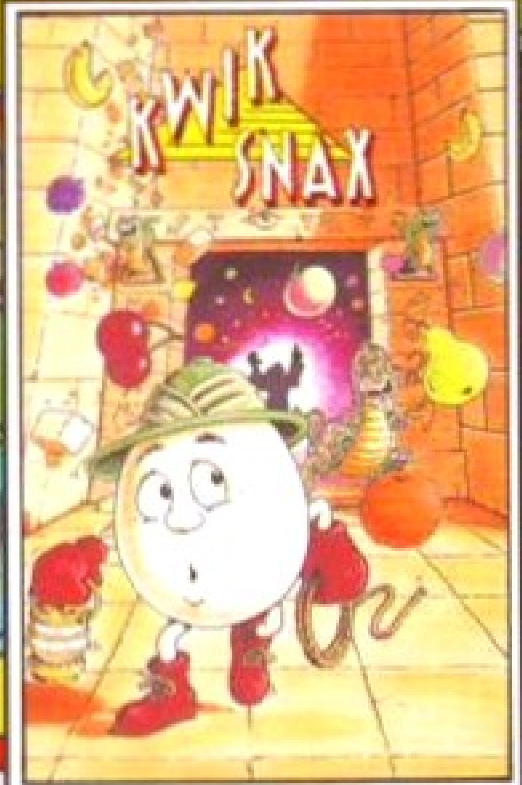
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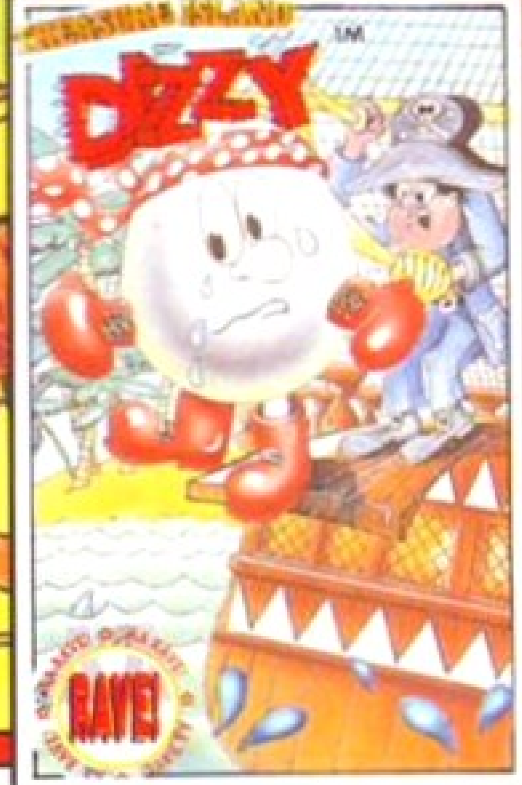
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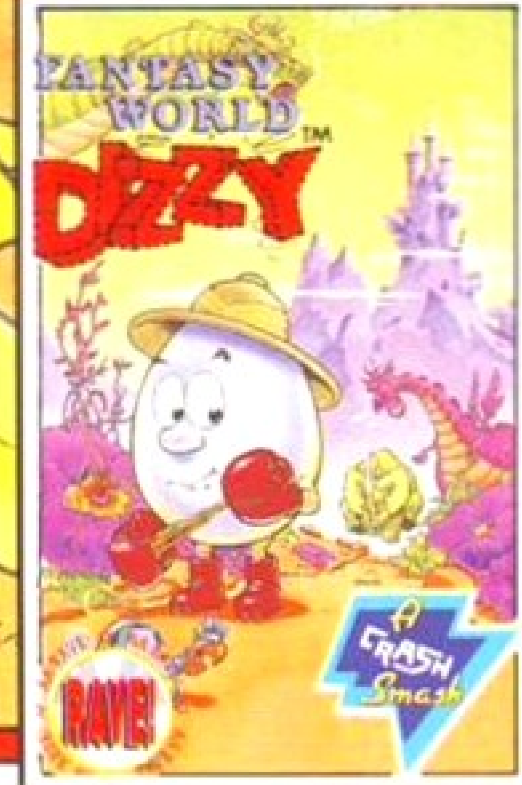
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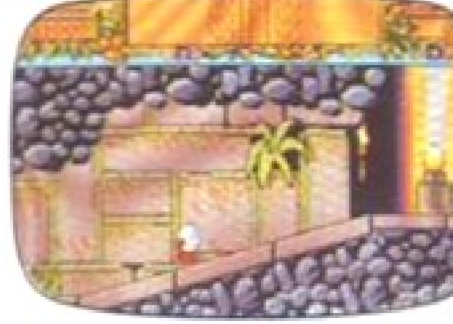


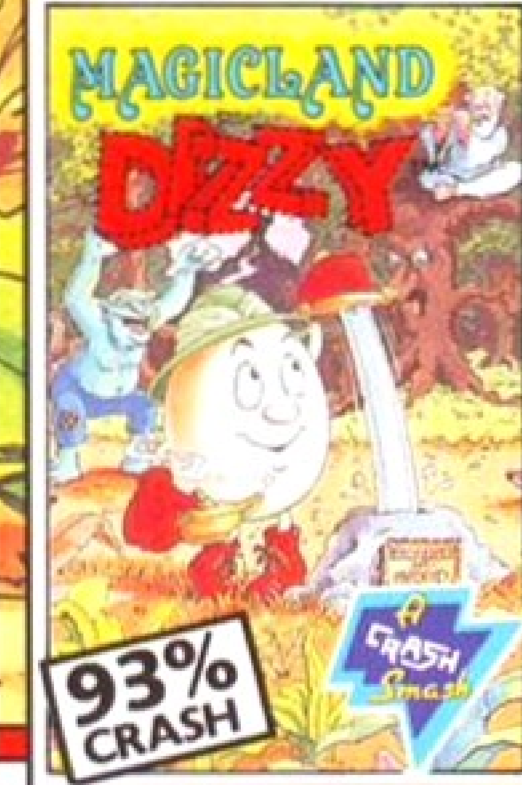
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CODEMASTERS

AMIGA screen shots shown. 8-bit versions feature "DIZZY" instead of "KWIK SNAX"

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This molten mother's serious! He not only throws punches, he throws his head as well. An excellent party trick, but I wouldn't try this one at home kids. You should have ducked Arnie.



I thought you said you could ride a motor bike, I'm getting my head smashed-in here!



As long as the trigger finger works I don't really mind. Complete the operation and all the fingers will wiggle to show that they have been repaired.

Terminator 2

Undoubtedly the biggest film of the year, but unfortunately not the biggest game. If you've seen the film then the game structure will be familiar to you, though the scenes have been simplified and a couple of puzzle levels added. You take on the role of Arnie: a reprogrammed Terminator-101 sent back in time to 1994 to protect the future rebel leader John Connor. The bad news is on your trail is a T-1000: a new-and-improved model made of liquid metal, whose mission is to terminate young John.

Roll credits: T-101 is being built, cut to side-view of corridor scene. You are face-to-face with the T-1000. Six gunshots, a flurry of punches and kicks later and T-1000 is out of action – temporarily. Cut to chase: overhead view. T-101 is racing through a storm drain on a Harley with John riding pillion, closely followed by a juggernaut driven by T-1000. You have to avoid the rocks, water, oil, while trying to pick up valuable bonuses. Fail and you get squashed by the truck, or collide with the final bridge; succeed and you get to carry John away to safety leaving the truck to smash into the bridge in digitised red-and-blacko vision .

What's the damage guv?

The third level is a puzzle level where you have to repair Arnie's hand: he probably damaged it when he was giving the Harley's throttle some welly. An interesting little teaser: all the wires and rods in his wrist are jumbled up, rearranging the squares, though, will put things right and allow him to wiggle his fingers. This operation is timed, so the amount of time left at the end is the bonus score. The percentage of the puzzle finished correctly will determine T-101's energy level for the next round.

Cut to the asylum: side view. Sarah and John are trying to make their escape while T-101 fires eight shots into the abdomen of the T-1000. Side-stepping the bullets he grounds T-101 with a single shot. Arnie recovers quickly and launches a fierce attack: a kick to the head, a kick to the side; his opponent goes down, only to reform a split second later. T-1000 commences to deliver countless, vicious head butts reaching unfeasible distances due to his liquid composition. But T-101 is smart enough to duck out of the way. The onslaught continues, but Arnie eventually overpowers his fellow terminator. Badly damaged and suffering from metal fatigue he retires to a safety to do some on-the-spot repairs again.

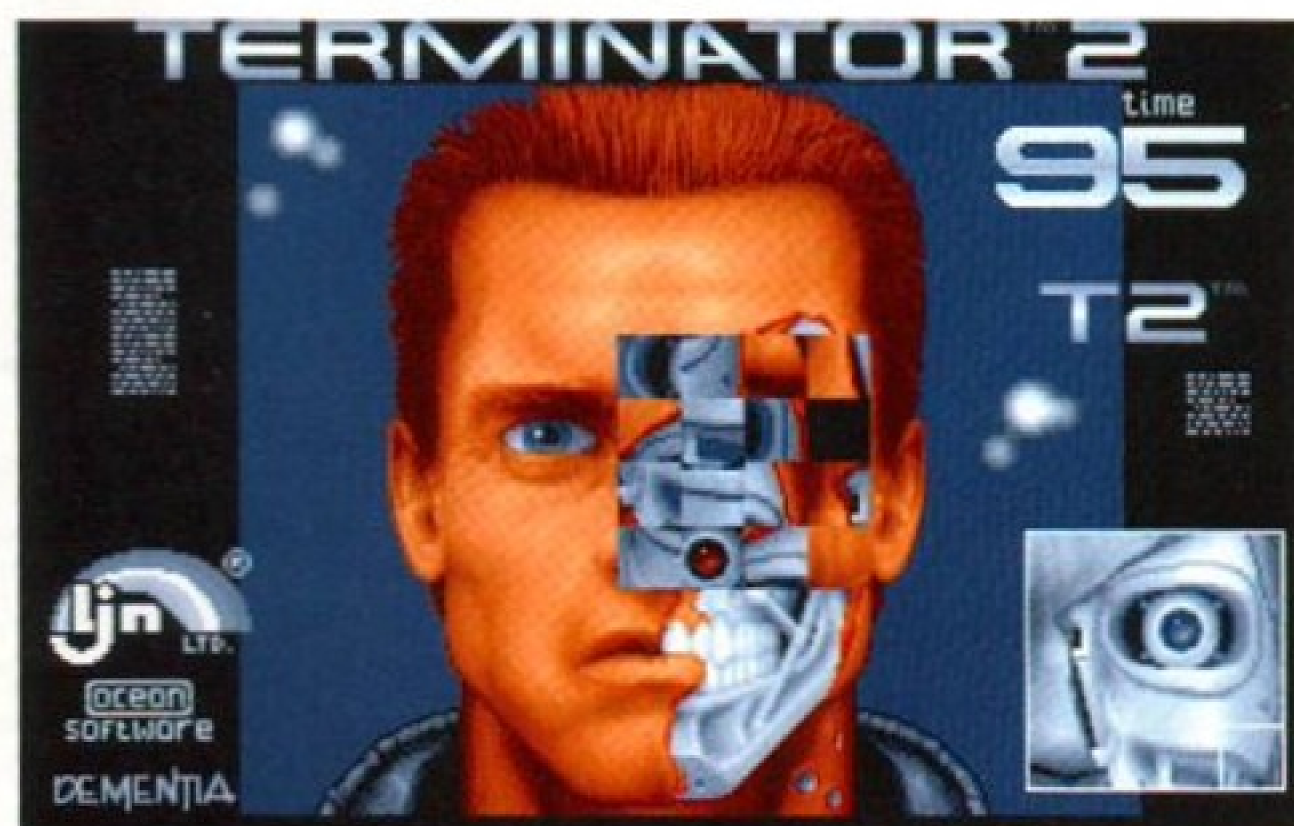
Full facial view: location unknown. The repairs T-101 has to make to himself are to the left side of his face. To regain full energy the injuries must be repaired quickly; there isn't much time. Working frantically (for a machine) he rebuilds his face, but time runs out too soon and only 83 per cent of the operation has been completed. A dejected T-101 resumes his mission.

Term-in-a-torture too!

Outside the Cyberdyne Laboratories: side view. T-101 shoots his way through a heavily-armed SWAT team, obviously summoned by angry neighbours complaining about the noise. Meanwhile Sarah and John are making another undercover escape to an unoccupied SWAT van (well they do in the film). T-101 finishes off the last of the SWAT team and rejoins them. Together they make a speedy retreat as the T-1000 reforms, hijacks a helicopter, and flies off in hot pursuit. Now the action really picks up – well slightly.



T-101 is ready for action. Well, when he finds his clothes that is.



Oh dear, what a mess! You've got 99 seconds to fix Arnie's face before his date arrives. Don't forget the lipstick and mascara.

On the Freeway: overhead view. T-101 takes control of the wheel as John's mum, Sarah Connor, fires at the helicopter from the back of the van. Arnie, though, hasn't passed his driving test so he does his best to weave through the dense traffic, hitting a few Sunday drivers along the way. The T-1000 lines up for a shot. Bang! Oh no! What's happened, everything's gone dark. T-101, Sarah and John have been terminated. Hasta la vista. You only get one life to get through eight levels!

Conversions from the big screen to the computer screen are usually disappointing. Ocean's *Batman* licence was the exception to the rule: it closely followed the plot of the film, was well animated and had a challenging gameplay hand-in hand with a big title. *T2* fails to meet these high standards. It has badly digitised intermission screens, unimaginative gameplay and little relevance to the film. What promised to be a game that you will never forget, turns out to be a glossily-packaged game you will try not to remember and probably regret buying. If you enjoyed the film, stick with it.

Frank Bartucca Jnr

Terminator 2
Ocean ■ £25.99

- The beat-em-up levels are bog standard.
- Crunchy sound effects are effective.
- The extra thrown-in puzzle levels make a nice change from the mindless violence.
- Much too simple to complete.
- The enormous budget used for the film wasn't taken into account for the game.

AMIGA FORMAT Verdict 60%

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Super Spac

A reworked classic or old hat? Has *Super Space Invaders* got the power

Know the name Toshihiro Nishkado? Well, he's enriched popular culture with language, concepts and myths. He has directly influenced your life. Who is he? He's the guy who invented the *Space Invaders* way back in 1978, when the pixel warriors came close to ruling the computer game's world. Now they're back; bigger, meaner and more devious than ever. But can the good old boys still cut it as threatening super nasties in the alien-infested Amiga world of the 90s?

Super Space Invaders takes the old theme – waves of little people slowly wandering down screen – up-rates the graphics, adds some ultra-mean new formations, invents whole new races of invaders, nicks your shields, adds some player power-ups and includes some truly silly bonus rounds. They may look like trimmings but they pull the gameplay up by the joystick lead.

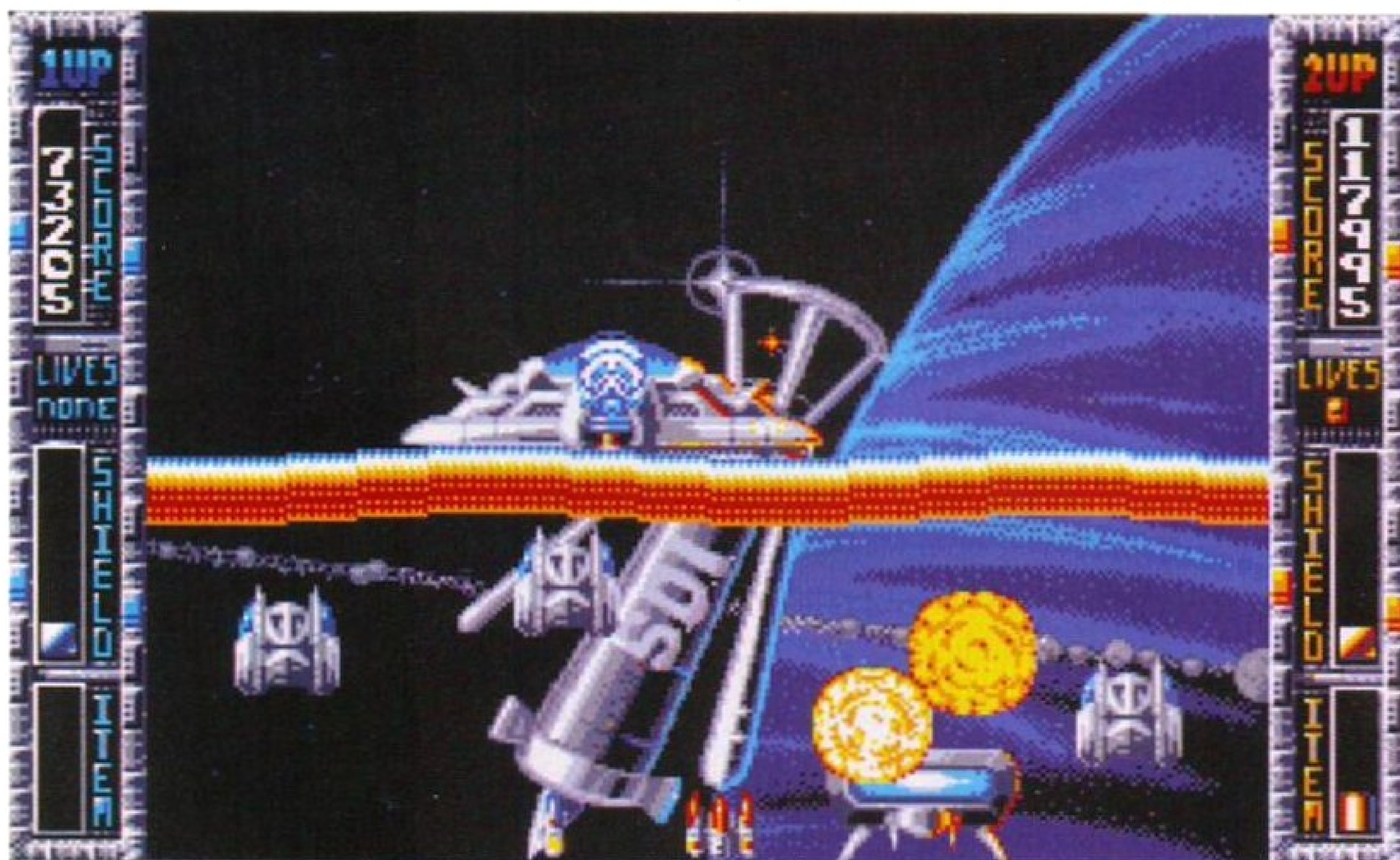


Agggh! Them darned Invaders are rustlin" cattle!You can try to stop them but run the risk of killing your own cows. This is a bonus rounds between waves, the more saucers you shoot down and the more cows left at the end the higher the score. The cattle are very polite and well worth saving, as they cry "thank you" when rescued.

It came from outer space

Super Space Invaders is a nostalgia trip, and the rose-tinted specs are pulled on the second that the title music starts up. Authentic – not copied or imitated or recreated – Invader pings act as percussion to a *War of the Worlds*-theme pastiche, so you know you're in for a magical history tour. When the first wave kicks on screen there's a rush of déjà vu, these little critters sure look smooth – no pixelly blocks here – but they are positively identifiable as the same folk who tried to take over 13 years ago. You base ship is familiar too, as it scrolls across the base of the screen shooting single shots at the space horde.

The Invaders wobble to each side of the screen, descending one line at a time until they reach the bottom. You have to blast the entire wave before they reach ground zero. The old tricks still work, such as blasting the end of the wave to make them walk further and give you more time, the old faithful alien mothership still slinks across the top; but that's where the similarity ends.



One of the main end-of -level bad guys gets a kicking thanks to a power-up that the mother ship dropped. This beam weapon normally kills the lowest line of Invaders, but there's only one here so it takes all the hits where it hurts.

War of the worlds

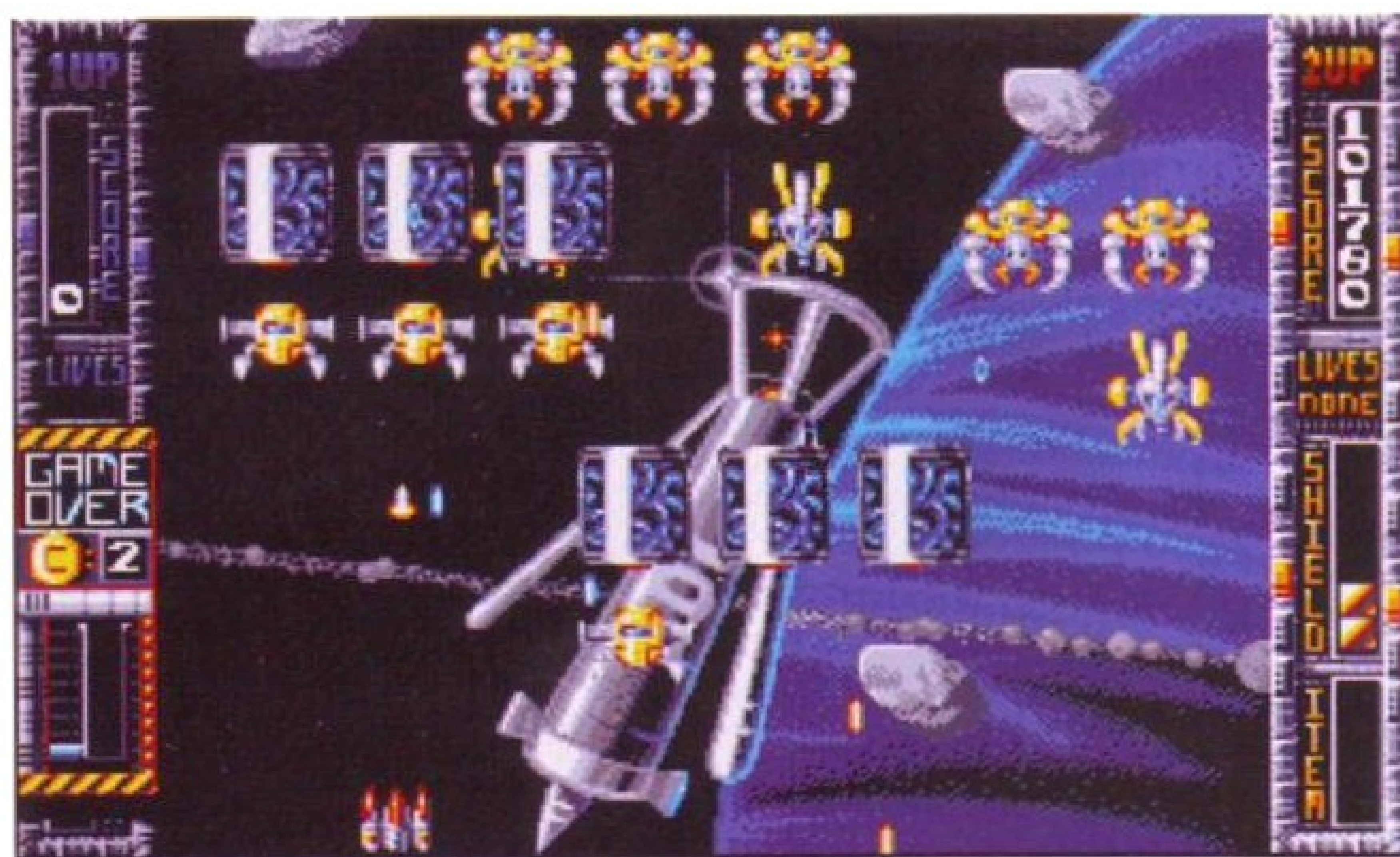
Kill a mother ship and instead of points (the old way) a power-up pod drops. Grab the power up, pull down on the stick and see what happens: it's Space Invader heaven – for you, not them – because all the weapons you could ever have wanted are offered. Beam lasers are the best, producing a vertical line of alien death that can be swept across the screen. Time Stops are handy, freezing the little space folks while a butterfly flies up the screen. Laser waves can be sent up to destroy the lowest line of aliens. Firestorm swirls can be launched into their midst. And random fireworm trails can be used to mess up even the tightest Invader line.

The power-ups aren't the only improvement to the classic *Invaders* structure, now there are end-of-level baddies and bonus rounds too. The guardians are a series of big guys who need the power-up treatment to be seen off with speed. Filling most of the screen they hurtle around throwing as many laser bolts as they can muster. If you don't happen upon a guardian at the end of a wave then a bonus round awaits. This section – based on 1950s' American UFO hysteria – is all about saving cows from Bovine-napping. A series of sitting-duck invaders come on for target practice at first, but eventually a cow will become spooked and a tractor-beam alien screams down to try and carry them away. Killing the Invader, but not the cow, earns extra points and a thank you from the grateful burger-to-be. Keep all six cows safe and there's an even bigger bonus awaiting you: the *Defender of the Earth*.

The waves themselves aren't all true Invaders. In their years off, space peeps have obviously been negotiating with Galaxians, Gorfs, Phoenix and a whole host of other arcade bad guys. They've swapped tactics so attack waves can take any form. Knowing



The Time Stop Butterfly freezes all wave aliens but has no effect on end-of-level guardians, what a waste of a power up pod!



Nasty, nasty, nasty. The bug invaders transform from specimen jars into baby bugs then into biggies every time they're shot. To make life worse the Asteroids have to be shot before they hit your ship. At least the targets here are large and easy targets some of the later waves are small sly blighters.

the original", but *Super Space Invaders* on the Amiga is most definitely its own game.

Invasion of the bodysnatchers

The change in pace from coin-op to computer is a moot point, but all the other additions and variations give the conversion a positive edge. Two-player simultaneous mode is the most obvious and helpful of these, because waves can be cut down to size with speed if a coordinated plan is adhered to. The screen mode lends itself better to the format, the waves are wider and harder to dash past, while it offers more safe zones beyond the Invaders' reach.

"It's not like the original", but Invaders on the Amiga is definitely its own game

e Invaders

to dominate the early Nineties like they did in the late Seventies?

Super Space Invaders is a good, arcade-inspired blast. It encompasses the best features of both original *Invaders* and the *Super* variety. It will never be something you play hour after hour, it's an arcade blast! It'll be played when you want a challenge but not an exam; when you want to kill something but haven't got the energy for a full-blooded shoot-em-up. If you lived through the first wave of Invadermania, then *Super Space* will have a stronger grip than if you hit arcades afterwards, but ancient history is fun for all ages.

Super Space Invaders' charm is timeless, the game format is still a winner 13 years after the original. Cheers Mr Nishkado.

Trenton Webb



Snails! These guys are slow but hard to kill as they keep turning sideways and going all thin to dodge bullets. For this wave though, your ship can also perform the same trick. It doesn't help much though, you'll still die!

what each wave will do affects your strategy and repeated play is the only way you can learn. But that little problem should take care of itself, *Invaders* is classic fun.

Plan 9 from outer space

Amiga Invaders are different, in a number of significant ways to their arcade cousins. Screen shape is the most telling, the arcade machine had a tall thin display while the conversion has a wider, monitor-shaped screen. The arcade is a speed machine, while the Amiga flavoured ones are slower. The coin-op doesn't have simultaneous two-player mode, but the conversion has. The information bars are displayed at the base of the cabinet version but the computer's has side panels which are clearer and easier to read. Graphically the two are close enough to be twins, but soundwise the Amiga wins hands down.

These differences affect play. Speed is the common gripe, the Amiga moves its space monsters far slower than the coin-op. As everything is slower though, it is not to the detriment of the game. The atmosphere changes as a result, from an adrenaline pumping shoot-em-up to a tense test that gets the palms sweating as the chromium chaps get ever closer. The slow start speed also makes the change of pace which accompanies the whittling down of invaders – as their numbers thin they move much faster – far more obvious. The slowish start speed may make some rabid conversion pedants froth, "it's not like

Super Space Invaders
Domark ■ £25.99

- Plays very differently to the arcade. It is its own game.
- Excellent recreations of the timeless Invaders' screen.
- Spiffy intro music and authentic effects.
- A shallowish arcade game that has personality oozing out.
- The Invaders are back and better than they ever were before.

AMIGA Verdict FORMAT **83%**



Two defenders have a go at a more Galaxian-style wave. These ones peel out of swirl mode and go into attack dives. Watch the skies!

FOOTBALL CRAZY CHALLENGE

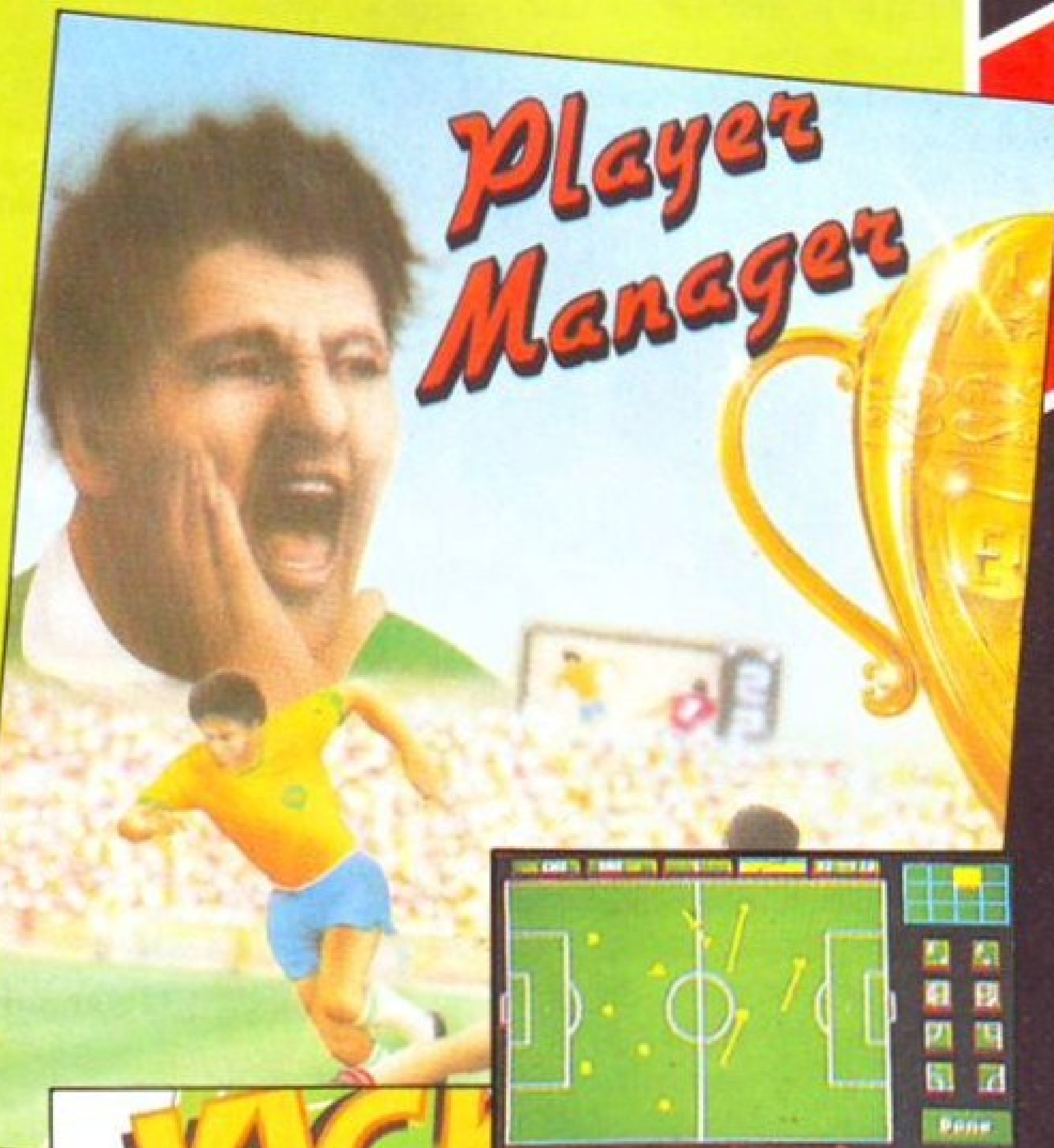
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You know how it is: you pile away from the starting line, foot hard down on the accelerator, popping through the gears to break away from the pack as quickly as possible. You slip past the other cars on the straight and hammer into the bend. Unfortunately, there's that green marker car you never saw before! Heaving the wheel to the side, you narrowly miss the opponent and scream out of control. Wrestling with the controls you bravely try to bring the car back on line, then... you wake up. Gremlin allowed you to live out this dream to a certain extent with *Lotus Esprit Turbo Challenge* and now you can take it further with *Lotus Challenge 2*.



Flying into a bend on the Forest Course is made rather more difficult by the presence of two opponents. Steer around them before they dive across the lanes and cut you off, otherwise you'll end up bouncing off the barriers.

Lotus Turbo Challenge 2



Gremlin fulfill drivers' dreams yet again with the sequel to their licence of one of the hottest sports cars around.

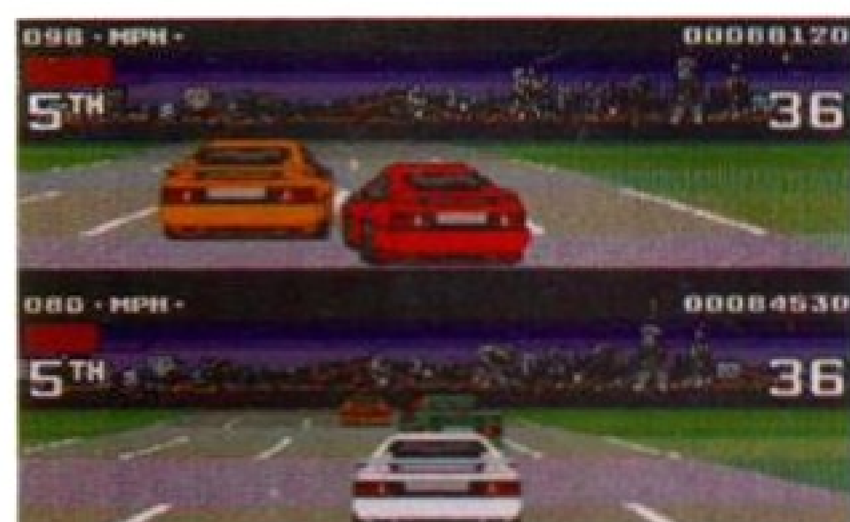
Courses of action

The game puts you in control of a Lotus Elan in a *Pole Position*-style, view-from-behind, race against the clock. The aim is to reach a series of checkpoints before the time runs out, the clock being reset every time you pass through a gate. You can either race solo, with the display taking up the whole screen, or in a head-to-head competition on a horizontally-split screen. If you happen to have a spare Amiga and a null modem lead, you can connect them together so that up to four people can race at the same time.

The competition takes place over eight different, gruelling stages, each one set in its own seperate environment:

Forest Course
This is a basic 'hammer along the road as quickly as possible stage'. All you have to do is swerve around the other cars and watch out for the water on the track.

Night Course
Its headlights on to illuminate you through this one, as you whiz around a series of tight turns and tunnels through a darkened city. Watch your distance though, things are a lot closer than they seem!



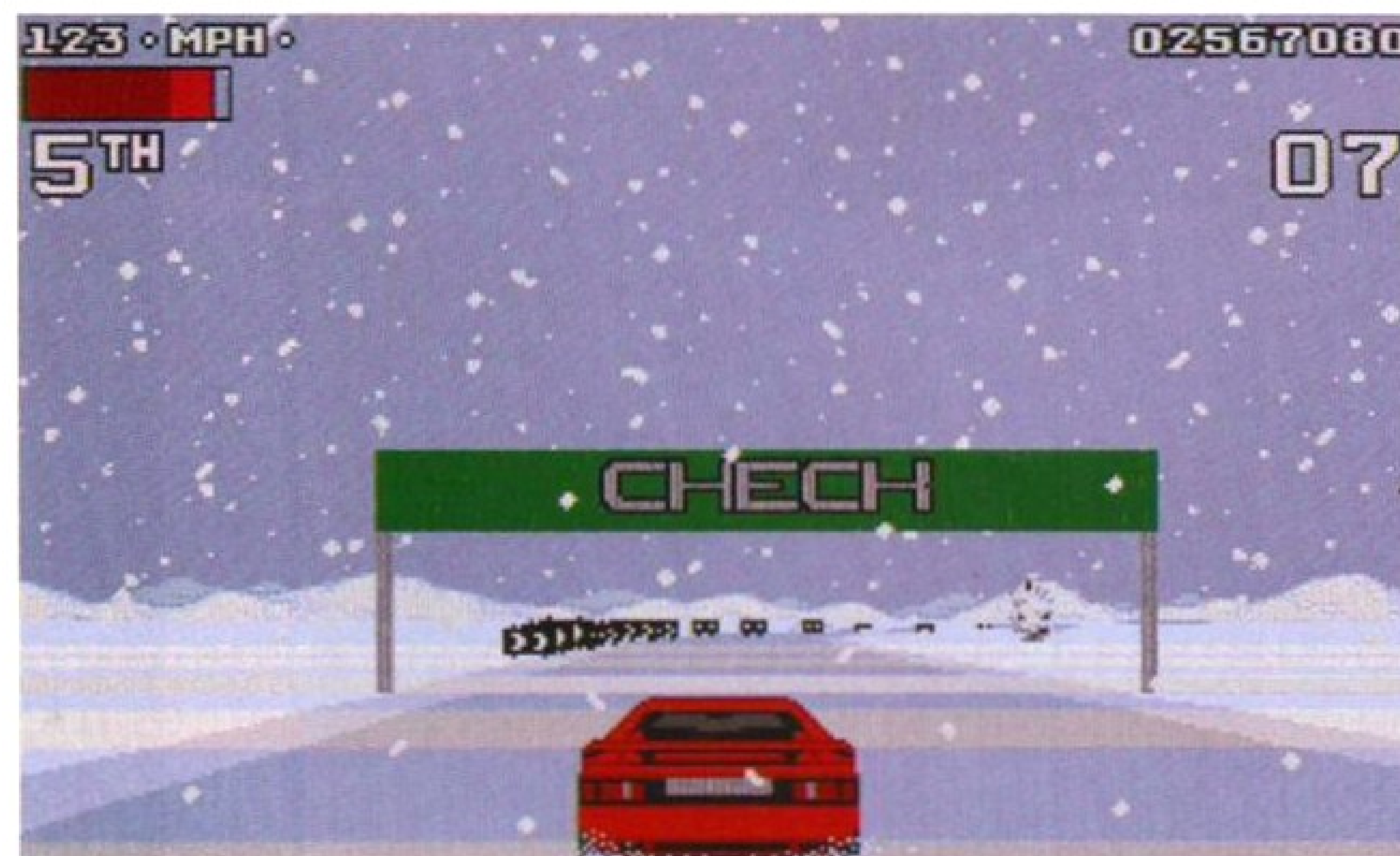
As the night draws in, the race moves to the city, where tight turns and dark tunnels are just two of the hazards in store.

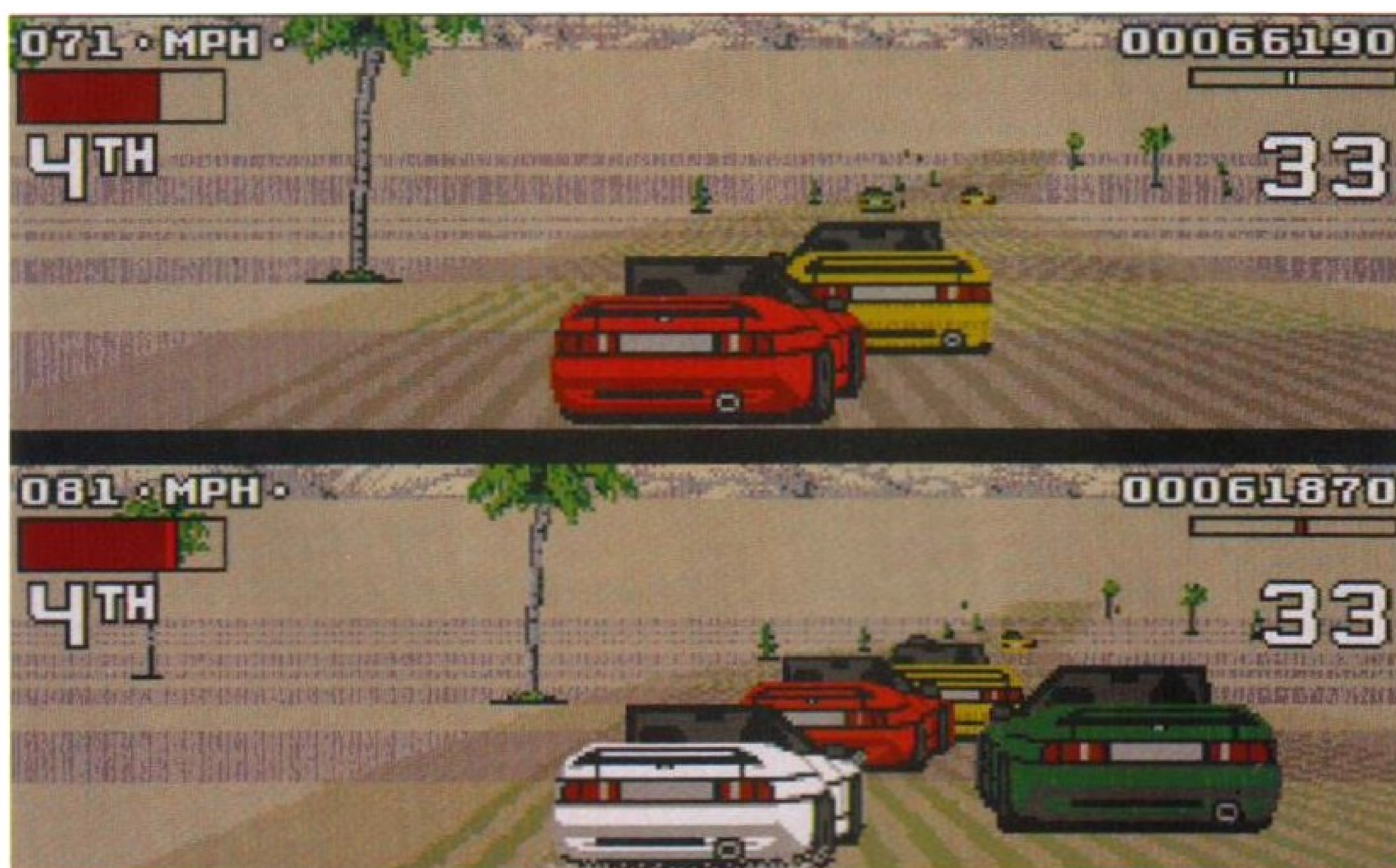
Fog Course
Take it easy on this course. The thick mist makes it difficult to judge the bends and you never know what could be lurking around the next corner.

Snow Course
The roads are very slippery in this wintery, rather Christmas-looking section, so concentrate carefully and try to compensate as you hit and slide round the bends.

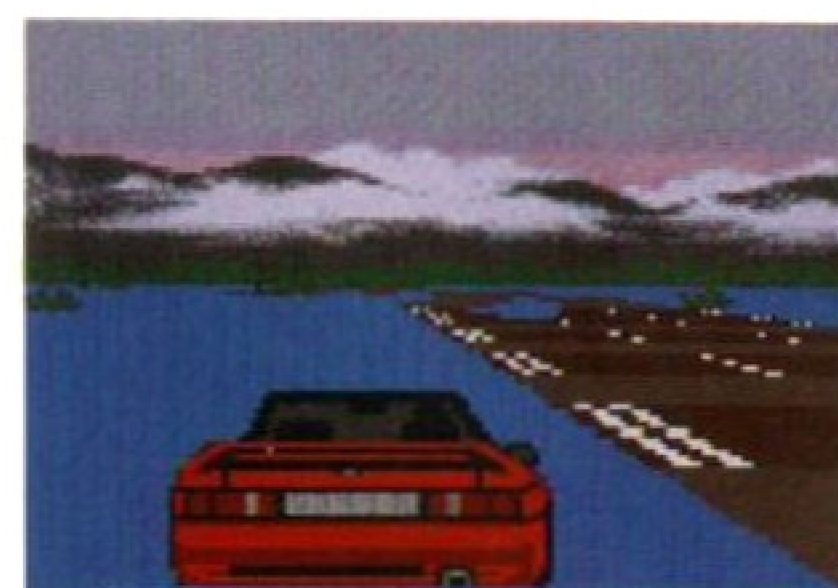
Desert Course
A dusty road littered with sand dunes and cacti hardly makes for the best of racing conditions, so watch the signs and try to stick to the road.

Despite having to battle his way through horrendous weather conditions, this plucky driver has managed to reach a check point on the Snow Course. There's no time to rest though, since there's still a long way to go until the finish line comes into view, though.





Oh heck! There's a bit of over-crowding going on at the first bend of the Desert Course! Only the driver with the sharpest wits and quickest steering skills will be able to dodge the other cars and make a break for the checkpoint.



"Never mind the water, it's only a puddle," you said! So tell me why we're starting to sink then, clever-clogs!

We don't need no re-run

A lot of people would probably argue that *Lotus Turbo Challenge 2* is a bit too similar to the original to be rated very highly. It's true that the style of the game is very similar, but the sequel has quite a few refinements which allow it to stand up in its own right.

As well as having a completely new series of courses, the graphics have undergone quite a few changes. For example, the original *Lotus* could only be played on a split-screen display, whereas playing in single-player mode on the sequel displays a full screen, complete with some pretty impressive horizon and sky effects. The addition of such items as a password system to access the higher levels and the fact that you can data-link two machines for a four-way competition also makes the game one of the most feature-packed car racing games available.

The sequel has quite a few refinements which allow it to stand up in its own right

The action is pretty rapid, especially when you are hammering around a series of downhill bends, and the feeling of tension as the clock counts to zero as you approach the next checkpoint is so immense. The only real criticism of the game is that it's pretty much a straight racing game. Sure there are lots of bells and whistles, but when you get down to the bare bones of the gameplay, it's just a foot to the floor *Pole Position* variant, albeit a very enjoyable one.

Maff Evans

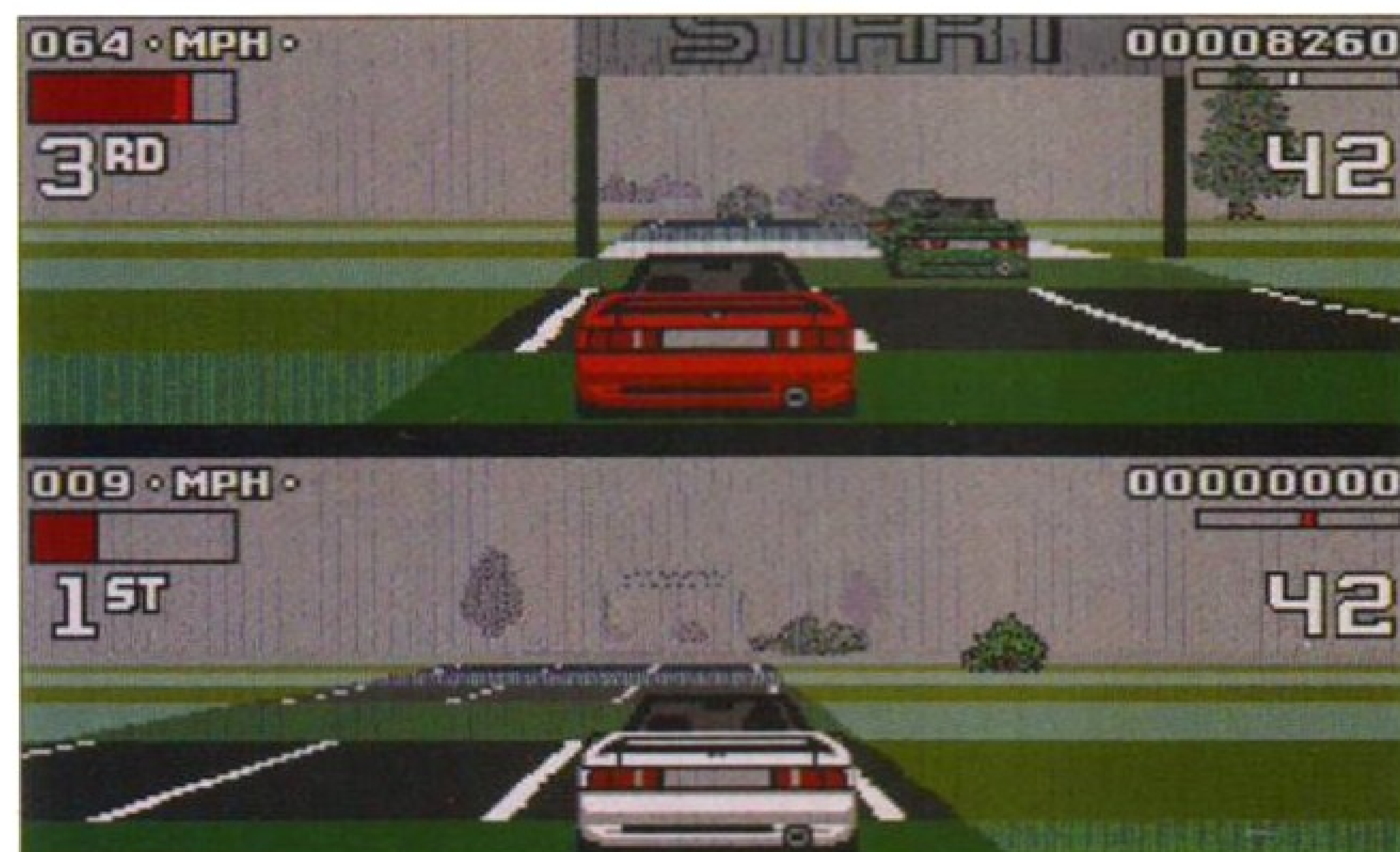


Thunder clouds darken the horizon as the rain starts to fall. The going could get slippy, but hard Lotus drivers don't worry about a drop of water... do they?

Motorway Course
Whatever you do, don't stray into the right-hand carriageway! You could find yourself in a head-on collision! Those low-bed trucks at the intersections will take some dodging too.

Marsh Course
Drifting off the sides of the road could cause problems here, since you tend to sink in the water! On the later sections, collect the time-domes to gain vital seconds.

Rain Course
Windscreen-wipers slapping, you have to take care not to come a cropper. The roads are slick so watch you don't skid!



Now remember drivers, things are always closer than they seem! Keep your distance and reduce speed accordingly. On the other hand, if you want to win the race just pile around at full pelt and smash the opposition out of the way!

Turbo Challenge 2
Gremlin ■ £25.99

- Large, fast moving and colourful graphics make this one of the better looking race games available.
- The various stages are challenging and different enough to make you play to 'see what the next one's like'.
- The data-link option gives you a chance to add the extra dimension of more human players, making racing more interesting
- A well designed and playable race game... but it is just a race game.

AMIGA FORMAT Verdict **89%**

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Pegasus

Straight out of *Clash of the Titans*, Pegasus, the winged horse, is your trusty steed who will help you make your way through the five planes of existence and rid the ancient worlds of Satan's hold and his horde of abominations of nature.

Chan the Sorcerer had a vision of a brave warrior on a winged horse traversing the five worlds to reach the ultimate goal: the defeat of Satan. Perseus, by some mystical coincidence, had a similar vision, though in his dream, it is he who is the warrior riding Pegasus. Perseus



has travelled to Chan's castle, where the Sorcerer has prepared the magical winged-horse Pegasus, and distributed as much magic as he could across the four planes: Desert, Swamp, Ice and War to help the two Pees along the way to the fifth plane, Hell.



Pegasus, the mighty winged steed of Greek legend, comes out to play in an all-shooting, all-killing horizontal-scrolling shoot-em-up. The levels alternate between flying sideways and running along the ground. The thing is, you don't get to ride the horse on the running levels, so why is the game called Pegasus?

Pegasus only has a weedy shot-power so any power-ups dropped by the flying nasties are greatly appreciated. These include a rather tasty 'nuke' option which smart bombs the screen.

Reality

The game is played on a horizontally-scrolling world, across the five planes. Each of the levels is split into five smaller stages. On each of these stages, there are two styles of play. The first part of each stage sees Perseus mounted on Pegasus, flying through the air, in combat with various airborne nasties and some other creatures on the ground. The next part of the stage has Perseus on foot, making his way through a barrage of Satan's mutants all with the sole intention of stopping Perseus in his tracks. Gameplay on both the stages is similar – shoot anything that moves, the only real difference being the change in controls.

While you shoot the hordes of attacking mutants, you are rewarded with a crystal. Collecting crystals entitles you to better weapons, an extra life, or more energy on the running stage, depending on how many you collect. This weapon upgrade and exchange is almost standard in games nowadays, to the extent that it is almost a cliché. What is peculiar is being able to upgrade to laser-like weapons, especially because this game's set in Greek mythology! Then again, the end-of-level guardians are pretty mean beasts, requiring some mega hefty fire-power to overcome them, so the power-up pulse lasers come in very handy...



When grounded the little rider has to defend himself with his sword. A small sprite in a big land he looks doomed but running proves safer than flying.



Level 11 and life's getting a little tougher. These skeleton monsters have to be shot, vertebrae by vertebrae.

Insanity

The game can easily become tedious: progressing through the 50 levels reaps little reward, there is little incentive to carry on to reach the last plane: Hell (except to defeat Satan, of course). Even getting this far can be difficult. The game is not easy, and it doesn't help that the game is a bit monotonous, without much variation from level-to-level to keep you interested.

Thankfully, *Pegasus* does have a password facility, which every 10 levels (at the end of the current plane after you have defeated the relevant guardian) you are rewarded with, so you can continue play at the world where your last game finished, without driving you to absolute insanity having to start from the beginning.

Oceanic

Graphically the game is nothing special, with colourful but uninspiring graphics. Character animation is good, with a nice flow, but the parallax scrolling is uneven, with an unpleasant jerky display, making the effect look quite poor. The sound is quite good though, at least on the introduction sequence where there is a pleasant piece of music. In-game sounds are restricted to sound effects although these are of a good standard.

It's a good game, but not very original – this particular game style has been around for years, and no doubt will continue to be. You could easily say 'seen it done it' – there is an ocean of similar games out there. The horizontal scroller format is very popular, and combining it with a platform-style game is novel, but not inventive enough to take this game up out of the mediocre.

Asam Ahmad

Pegasus
Gremlin Graphics ■ £25.99

- Colourful graphics, if a bit blocky.
- Game is easy to control, but can get difficult in places.
- Little variation from level to level makes game a bit repetitive.
- Decent sound and effects.
- New approach to an old style.



61%

Simulations usually rely on the high-tech hardware they are mimicking for charisma. But here's a game that stars Fokkers and Sopwiths that has its own distinctive style.



Tally ho! It's a hard day's knight for that German plane who is about to become Lewis gun fodder. All it will take is a quick skidding stall turn and he'll be in perfect range. Knights of the Sky is a dogfighting dream – until the guns jam!

Knights of

Looking down on the muddy hell of the Somme is a sobering thought. Europe is killing itself 5,000 feet below and all that holds you aloft is a precarious plane made of nothing but plank and plywood. To add to the terror Richthofen, the Red Baron, is hunting down allied pilots in the early morning clouds. Be afraid, be very afraid.

Knights of the Sky recreates the air wars of 1916. You're a pilot in the formative years of air combat, one of the brave few whose names became legends. High-tech jets are all well and good, but flying on a wing and a prayer has a terrifying edge, and this piece of software catches the atmosphere of innocence and fear well: back when flying by the seat-of-the-pants was the way you learned not hyperbole.

Aces high

It's late Spring, the Germans still rule the skies, but better Allied planes and more pilots



It's not flying I'm scared of it's crashing! Those who don't want to lose a valued pilot to a bad landing can select the 'Autoland' function. It's safe and you can watch it happen from outside the plane. Spiffy!

are beginning to erode the Jerry's advantage. You join the war as a young recruit with only a few flying hours logged, but ready to risk your life in ramshackle machines. The aim is to survive the war and to become an ace. The options that face you are simple: join the war straightaway, practice the various duties you'll perform at the front, go head-to-head against a chosen ace or hit the comms option and fly for fun against a friend.

Practice follows the well worn, and reassuring, MicroProse path. Different missions and levels of difficulty can be mixed up as you try your hand in all of the game's 20 planes. It's here that the planes reveal their strange characteristics: foibles that you have to learn to live with. Jet jockeys will invariably try to pull high-G manoeuvres, tight turns and afterburning tricks only to find that primitive prop systems can't actually go ballistic. These planes have to be coaxed rather than flown, nursed into climbs and edged out of stalls. Try an Immelman turn here and you'll find out why the move was revolutionary.

The manual recommends that you try to fly the standard dogfight moves: trust them they know what they're doing. Stick with the program and you'll survive the first fight; rush straight for the front and you'll find that beautiful new flying jacket is full of holes. New tricks have to be learned and all the regular flight sim tricks have to be unlearned.

The Blue Max

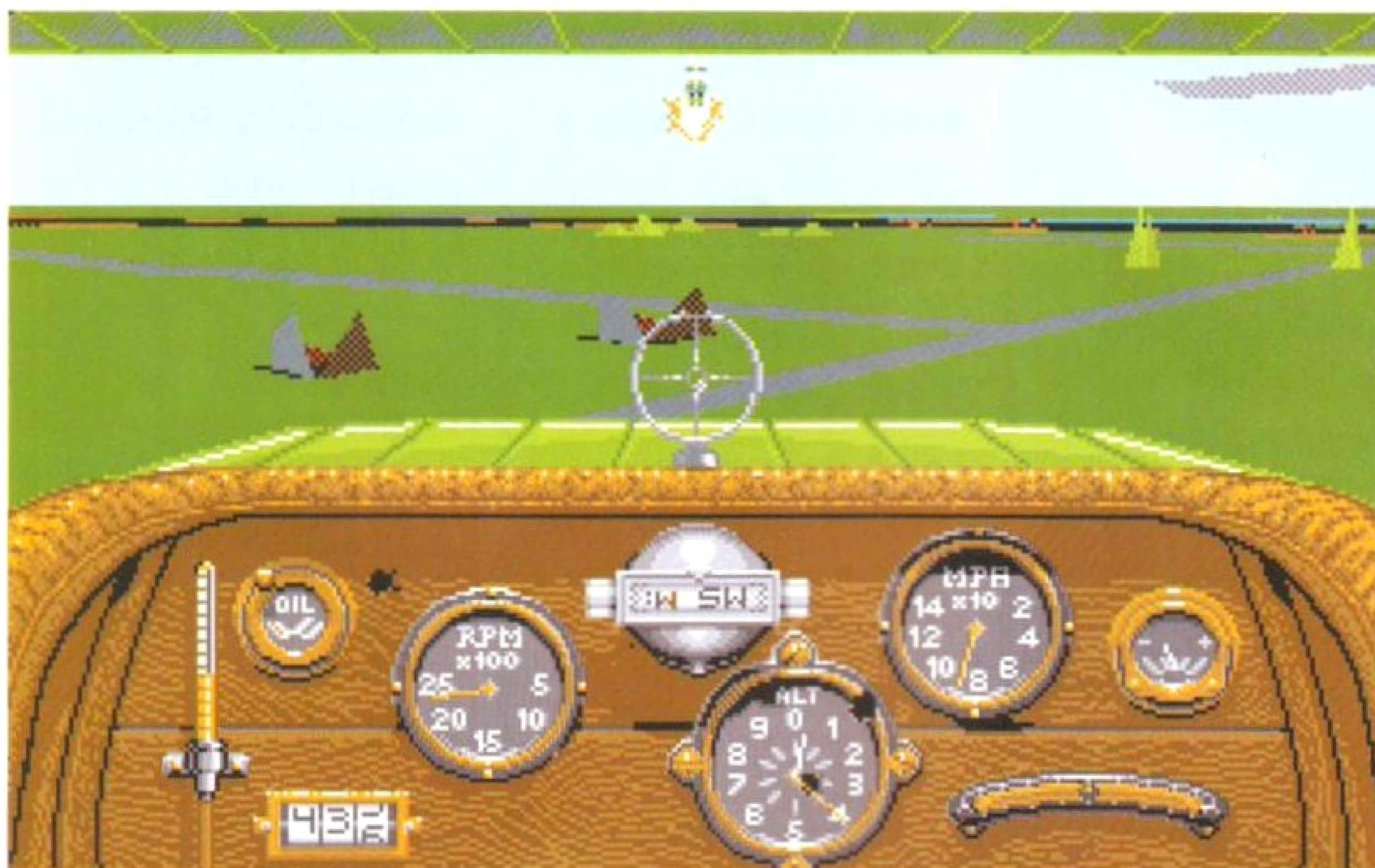
At the front line life is harsh – you can determine how harsh at the difficulty level stage – as day after day you are sent on missions to bomb, strafe and shoot down the dreaded Hun. The trouble is that they are trying to do the same to you.

The missions are varied enough to keep even ace killers happy: balloon busting, truck strafing, escort duty and air superiority each have their own tricks. Balloons are defended by triple A but rarely fighters, so the kill count will stay low but you'll stay alive. Strafing is barn-storming stuff, screaming in low and level, but continually risking ground hits. Escort Duty is made tough because you have to keep pace with slower observation planes and try not to accidentally shoot them down. Air Superiority is best for pushing up your ace rating, but because whole enemy wings can be encountered by a single plane, your flying life-span is not assured.

If you do massive damage to the German war effort you win medals and promotion, score five kills and you become an ace and a target for the second, deeper game motive. A war of egos rages between Allied and German Pilots. The best from each side are feared by the many but sought by the few. As your



As the Great War rages you can slowly climb the Ace ratings. This has the double benefit of earning masses of medals and attracting the attention of the jealous German pilots who hate to see an Allied fighter getting too good – it's bad for their insurance premiums!



Strafing enemy tents causes all kinds of things to hit the fan. There's a Hun on the trail of this knight: the tell tale signs of bullet holes in the dashboard mean if he doesn't move he'll get his tail chewed by the Hun's guns.



Now that's what I call an end-of-game baddie. He's the ultimate challenge for allied knights who take his 'Ace of Aces' slot.

the Sky

reputation grows, so will the clippings ledger and gossip tally that tell you where to find the opposing aces. Some foolhardy aerial killers directly challenge Allied pilots to duels above a certain town at a set time; high noon at 5,000 feet! Other, wiser, aces have to be hunted down. These are the richest rewards to heroic Knights: dogfights against the true greats.

Wings

The Sopwiths, Eindekkers and Fokkers feel unnatural at first, but the simulation has been built to be flown and not crashed. *Knights* is friendly to the new pilot, allowing the fun of flight, but removing the dangers of things like landings and armed opponents. Supporting these 'cheats' are logical key commands that make your flight with MicroProse a pleasure.

If you haven't got the courage, know-you or if you lack the skills to land, pilots on easier levels can simply employ the 'auto land' function which brings even the shakiest of pilots down to earth. If a plane is in the distance then a zoom is available – because it's not clever to shoot down your own side – to scope out the other guy's colours before opening fire, even in pause mode!

The Red Baron

Knights of the Sky has a fresh feel, unrestricted by all the techno jargon that surrounds the latest, supersonic flight simulations. It handles the flying well, creating a squadron of similarly dissimilar planes. None of them are brilliant, but some are very good. The lack of clutter up-front, though, is what marks it out as an ace in its own right. Enemies have to be spotted and tracked, not locked on radar. Waypoints are still science fiction here, so pilots have to follow landmarks or compass for directions. These make the whole flying experience more of a game, forcing greater control and interaction.

Hunting down the enemy's crack pilots gives the fights a candid touch – was that red Eindekker really Richthofen? They force more into the 'between-flights' section too. The rewards aren't just medals, but the power to track down a vaunted foe. It gives you something to shoot for other than personal glory.

Excellent 3D and static graphics ram home the message that this is *the* Amiga biplane sim.

The flying is fun but slow, in terms of velocity not frame rate, and it's all too easy to become disorientated. Knights' navigation is confusing, but then so was the real thing. *Knights* captures the First World War theme well, segmenting a story into the simulation.

Excellent 3D and static graphics ram home the message – this is *the* Amiga biplane sim. It can be an absorbing and thrilling aviation history lesson, but you have to find the period and subject interesting to make soldiering through the initial 'duff plane and I'm lost' syndrome, worth it. Learn to fly one of these beauties, though, and you're guaranteed hours of testing dogfights to the death against some of flying's greatest heroes.

Trenton Webb



While in flight training you can test drive any of 20 planes Knights of the Sky simulates. This has to be the biggest donkey of them all, looking more like a pram than a plane. The best ones to test are the Fokker Eindekkers which the Red Baron flew. When at war you only have the Allied planes to pick from and they're all duff until late 1918!

Knights of the Sky
MicroProse ■ £30.99

- Standard MicroProse sim fare ie excellent 3D action!
- The 'plot' gives the simulation gameplay some focus.
- Planes appear slow and the navigation confusing to jet jockeys.
- Fight the great aces of the World War I in dogfight duels.
- *Knights* is definitely the king of Amiga biplane flight simulations.

Verdict 88%

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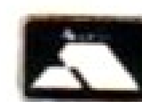
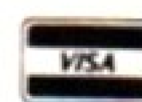
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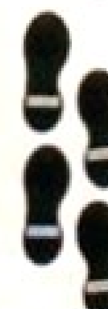
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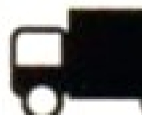


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The last section of Screenplay is where we 'hold-the-back-page' while the charts come galloping in, plus make room for a few shortie reviews and a cute little insect...

Spoutro

The Bug

Verdict 92%



A gimmick or great joystick? The Bug may look like a toy but it could save a serious games-player's life. Or at least a couple of credits.

Cheetah £14.99 0222 867777

It looks weird and works well. Although it resembles a tacky novelty joystick that self-destructs during the first heavy games session you shouldn't judge a joystick by its casing, because this is a serious player's stick. The bug's cast from smooth plastic and a small stick that sits in the palm of your hand. The lever is on the Bug's back and can be manipulated with either your free hand or the thumb of the holding hand. The two fire buttons are at the front – forming the Bug's eyes – within easy reach of the fingers of the holding hand. The Bug's tail is the lead to the computer and an autofire switch sits behind the lever.

The Bug easily satisfies the basic joystick requirements of precise control and user comfort. The light lever means that quick changes of direction can be made without fighting against springs. The sensible size ensures everybody, left or right handed, young or old, can use it.

Bug out

The size and position of the fire-buttons ensures that quick shots can be squeezed out quickly without inducing the aches that are normally associated with palm-held joysticks. Annoyingly, though, the 'eyes' have been given eyelids for purely cosmetic reasons and these can chafe.

The details don't explain why the Bug's so good. It's accurate, easy to use and suits virtually every style of game. It excelled at *Volfied*, allowing the swift rotation needed to escape the sparks. *Knights of the Sky* stressed subtle movements, because these dated planes were prone to over react and that's what the Bug does best. In *Lotus 2* it was essential that you knew where the stick was at all times, the Bug's good response passed its driving test. *First Samurai* was the stick's only failing and there it just didn't feel right, although it executed its duties well.

In nature bugs have a habit of transforming from creepy crawlies into something quite beautiful, the Bug joystick shares this trait. An attractive stick to look at and a good one to use: the Bug is the business. The adverts ask: "Are you immune?" and I must admit, I don't think I am.

Mega Twins

Verdict 60%

US Gold
£25.99



As end-of-level bad guys go, this one's a cinch. Just dodge the swinging arm then leap into attack the folks behind the four doors.

Here's a game that tries to be cute with every bite of its data, but it doesn't make the grade. All the constituent parts are there, strong single-colour sprites, a twee cartoony tale and a jangly tune, but these twins just weren't born cute.

This is a platform-leaping, get-close-and-kill-the-monsters-for-bonuses sort of game. The two young heroes, who can play simultaneously, are on the trail of their parents' killers. This entails a level-by-level trial by nasties, which the two nippers have to survive. Guardians sit at the end of each level and the the Twins must bash them, and their thralls, with little swords until they go 'poof'. To help you out in dodgy moments are smart bombs that take the form of star showers and lightning storms.

These components are fine as are the story and the concept but the game just lacks soul. There's no direct tactile feel for the sprite, you can move them but there's no real sense of control. As a result the game feels remote, which is a cardinal sin for an arcade, so there's no sense of involvement. Strangely the not-so-cute *Mega Twins* initials are MT, which is just the way it feels.



Try as they might the Mega Twins can't be cute. They feel too remote from control, for the intense play.

Magical History Score

LAST YEAR'S GAMES	**AF17**
Indianapolis 500	
Electronic Arts	92%
Killing Game Show	
Psygnosis	92%
Lotus Turbo Esprit Challenge	
Gremlin	89%
Mean Streets	
US Gold	88%
Paradroid '90	
Hewson	88%
Pang	
Ocean	87%
Betrayal	
Rainbird	84%
Battlemaster	
PSS	83%
Wolfpack	
Image Works	83%
Cadaver	
Image Works	83%
James Pond	
Millennium	81%
Super Off-Road Racing	
Virgin	80%
The Spy Who Loved Me	
Domark	80%
Xiphos	
Electronic Zoo	80%
Gremlins 2	
Elite	79%
The Amazing Spiderman	
Empire	77%
Voodoo Nightmare	
Palace	75%
The Fool's Errand	
Miles Computing	70%
Torvak the Warrior	
Core Design	69%
Mannix	
Millennium	69%
New York Warriors	
Virgin	65%
Badlands	
Domark	46%

LAST MONTH'S GAMES	**AF28**
Flight of the Intruder	
Mirrorsoft	88%
Midwinter II	
MicroProse	87%
Elf	
Ocean	85%
Utopia	
Gremlin	84%
Magnetic Scrolls Collection	
Virgin	83%
Their Finest Missions	
US Gold	83%
Silent Service II	
MicroProse	82%
Stratego	
Accolade	81%
James Bond Collection	
Domark	73%
Rolling Ronny	
Virgin	76%
Boston Bomb Club	
Palace	74%
Pitfighter	
Domark	60%
Final Fight	
US Gold	60%
Thunderjaws	
Domark	51%
Altered Destiny	
Accolade	54%
Darkman	
Ocean	48%
Zone Warrior	
Electronic Arts	36%



In space no one can hear you use an Uzi 9mm! Kill the aliens, collect the goodies and save the day!

Alien Breed

Team 17 £25.99

A simultaneous two-player *Ikari Warriors'* style blast, *Alien Breed* takes a clean-up crew into a bug-infested space station. It all gets pretty messy from here on in with digitised screaming, swish graphics and lots of alien-busting-through-floors type action.

The game focuses on two overhead heroes who are working their way around an Alien-infested space station. Their aim is to clean up the whole place but this requires them finding keys, cash and ammunition.

This is certainly by far the best looking of any shoot out in this style, but some control problems ruin the glossy finish. In two-player mode the players can get jammed between doorways and forced into a combat corner where continual computer access is unavoidable. These faults are annoying but avoidable once you know them.

Team 17 have made a major move on the full-price scene and put many of the games currently on the market to shame. It does disappoint but only in terms of design, not ingenuity. It's the Team's first full-price project, though, and a solid debut into the gaming big league.



Those loveable cartoon dogs Scoob and Scrap get busy in a multi-level land. Where's Thelma and Shaggy?

Scooby Doo and Scrappy Doo

Hi-Tech £7.99

Remember when kids' cartoons were kids' cartoons and Scooby Doo ruled the roost. Then they recreated the series with the ultimately annoying little geek Scrappy Do. It's never been the same since.

A jolly little collect-em-up, *Scooby and Scrappy Do* is a friendly, fun, cartoon licence. Playing the two dogs you have to leap about a list of locations picking up munchies and other points, scoring bonuses. Various monsters get in the way and have to be killed or dodged. It stresses good close stick work and observant play.

The game's tense by virtue of the speed of play. It's not difficult, you just get carried away with high-speed running and jumping routine. Scooby and Scrappy then up the difficulty - a bit - and life gets really interesting

Scrappy Do is dogged with some rather iffy collision detection, but as this works in your favour it doesn't harm the game. As for the licence, the sprites look right but the play has little basis in the cartoon reality from whence it came. It's fun but disposable and I would have got a high score too – if it hadn't been for those darned kids.



Turrican goes ape with his lazer whip, just one of the many great weapons on offer to this super slayer.

Turrican

Kixx £7.99

One of the most fearsome platform blasts ever seen is out on budget. In *Turrican* you have to guide a sprite through five hostile landscapes collecting weapons and killing things. It's packed with hidden bonuses, but despite these interest flags in the later levels when the opponents get harder and the gameplay remains the same. For eight quid though this is a good, no-holds blast. If you want large scale arcade action check it out. Beware this game will eat into your evenings and weekends, it's real big.



Can you control this colour board? 7 Colours will test strategic thought and forward planning.

7 Colours

Infogrames £25.99

This is an absorbing colour-based puzzle test, but just lacks any real impact. A finely tuned, strategic balancing act where you have to dominate the game board with a single colour. It plays like Othello with seven different counters and a tough computer opponent. You start at opposite ends of a multi-hued board and build out from there. By selecting colours you gradually work to dominate the board and win the round.

7 Colours is well put together but doesn't pull players in. Those seeking a quietly-taxing board-style game will love it - once you get into it, it's good - but folks who like action will be disappointed by the absence of pressure which is essential for this style of game.

This month's scores

Robocod
Millennium.....91%
First Samurai
Image Works.....91%
Battle Isles
UBI Soft.....90%
Lotus Turbo Challenge 2
Gremlin.....89%
MiG-29 M Superfulcrum
Domark.....89%
Knights of the Sky
MicroProse.....88%
Heimdall
Core Design.....88%
Turrican
Kixx.....88%
Blues Brothers
Titus.....86%
Face-Off
Krisalis.....83%
Super Space Invaders
Domark.....82%
Last Ninja 3
System 3.....81%
Suspicious Cargo
Gremlin.....80%
Magic Garden
Electronic Zoo.....79%
OutRun Europa
US Gold.....78%
Alien Breed
Team 17.....74%
Volfied
Empire.....72%
Scooby Do and Scrappy Do
Hi-Tech.....69%
7 Colours
Infogrames.....64%
Pegasus
Gremlin.....61%
Terminator 2
Ocean.....60%
Mega Twins
US Gold.....60%

Jim – still all white

Jimmy White is still world champion, reigning the software world with an iron cue. After leaping straight in at Number One last month he's held, on despite a stiff challenge from the Silent Submariners and Terminators. Curiously the last game to take and hold the top spot so ferociously was *Kick Off 2*, have Amiga game players got a sports fixation?



Nice try!

Domark have smuggled their Rugby title out from the coding ruck in time to benefit from the hysteria – well, mild interest – surrounding England's qualification for the Rugby World Cup finals. Unfortunately the game arrived too late for a full review, so check out Screenplay next month for the details. First impressions, though, are good.

Go Bubble.

Bubble Bobble, the stunningly archaic, but stunningly good arcade classic is attacking the charts on two fronts. It's leapt straight into the budget Top Ten and the full-price chart in the way of the *Rainbow Collection* compilation – *Rainbow Islands*, *New Zealand Story* and *Bubble Bobble*. It's good to see pure gameplay doing so well, even if the graphics are duff!

BUDGET CHART

1(-)	**Return to Europe** Anco	£7.99
2(-)	**Bubble Bobble** Hit Squad	£7.99
3(-)	**Shadow of the Beast** Sizzlers	£7.99
4(-)	**Dragon Ninja** Hit Squad	£7.99
5(1)	**Full Contact** Team 17	£9.99
6(-)	**Head Over Heels** Hit Squad	£7.99
7(2)	**TV Sports Football** **Mirror Image**	**£9.99**
8(6)	**Lombard RAC Rally** Hit Squad	£7.99
9(7)	**Fantasy World Dizzy** Codemasters	£6.99
10(-)	**Batman – The Movie** Hit Squad	£7.99

Oooops!

In last month's review of *Midwinter 2*, alias *Flames of Freedom*, we said the game was not hard disk installable. This was in fact a fib: you can install it on hard disk quite happily and it does improve the playability. We thought you ought to know. The offending reviewer has now been sent to live on a small island off the coast of Africa where he will have to suffer the possible oppression of invaders from all over the place. But at least the sea's not fractal…

Who killed the Intro page?

Where, oh where, you must have asked, is the Spintro page: the glossy Screenplay intro page that tells you where to find all the games? Current investigations indicate that it has been killed by one of these people:
(a) Trenton Webb, Er, out to lunch.
(b) Frank Bartucca, some Italian.
(c) Greg Ingham, The Slayer.
The first person to grass the villain up gets an *AF* T-shirt. So if you know who did the dirty deed and want Screenplay Intro back from the dead, write in identifying the culprit (a,b or c) to: It was Greg what did it, *Amiga Format*, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon, BA1 2BW.

Below

Charts in no score shocker! *Striker Manager* and *Rugby - The World Cup* haven't got scores because we haven't scored them yet. *Rugby* arrived too late for a review and we haven't seen *Soccer* yet!

THE AMIGA FULL PRICE CHART

1(1)	■	**Jimmy White's Whirlwind Snooker** Virgin	£29.99	FG91%
2(12)	▲	**Silent Service 2** MicroProse	£34.99	82%
3(-)	New	**Terminator 2** Ocean	£25.99	60%
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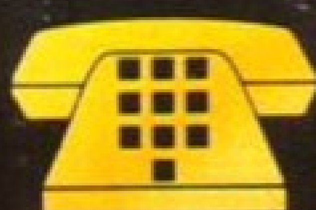
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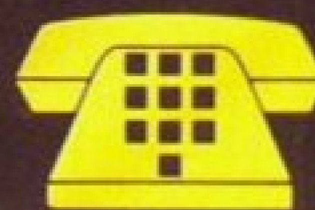
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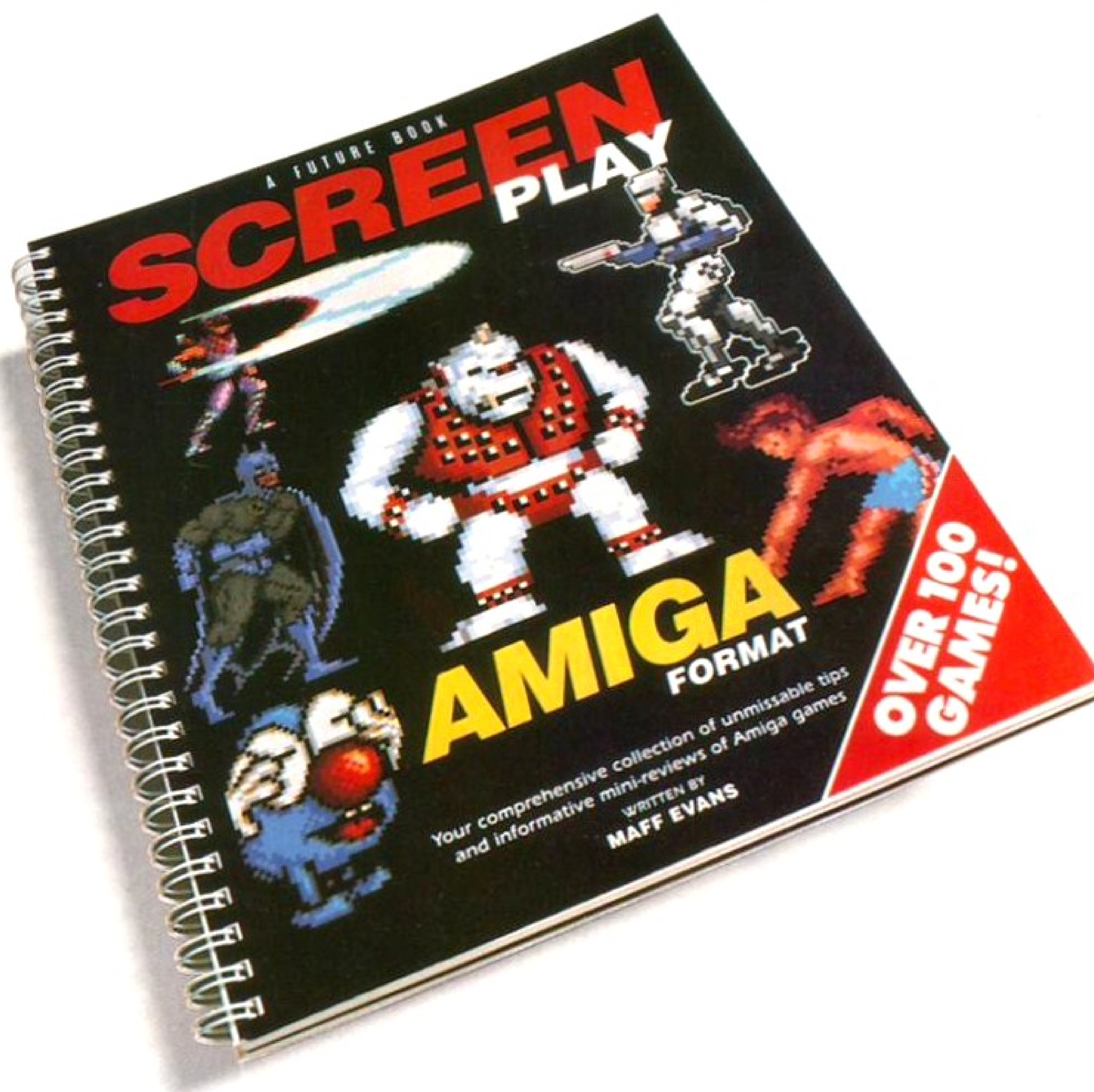


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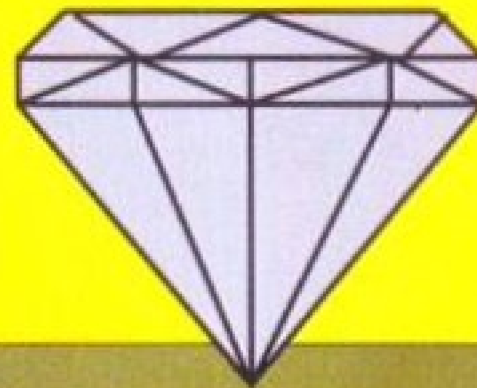


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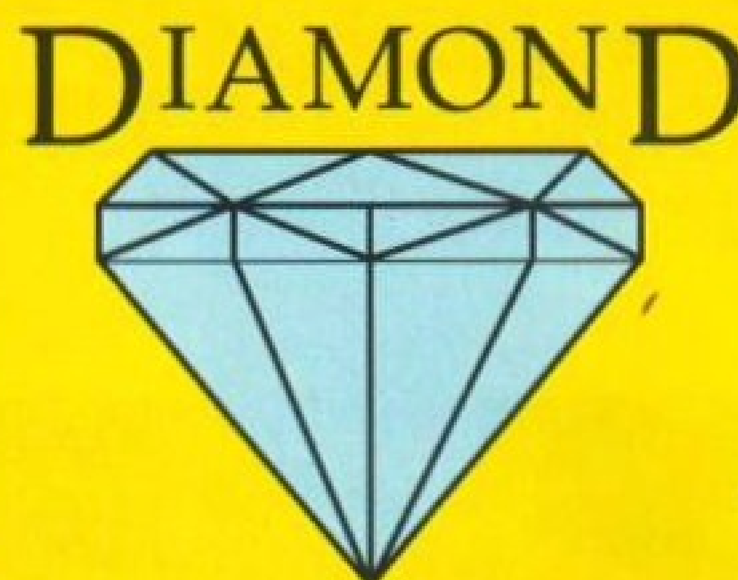
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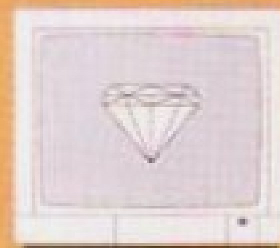
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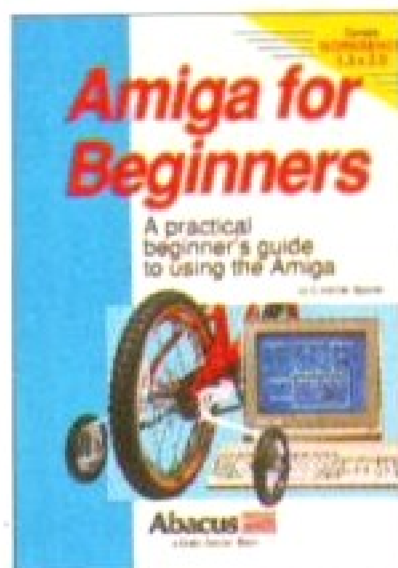
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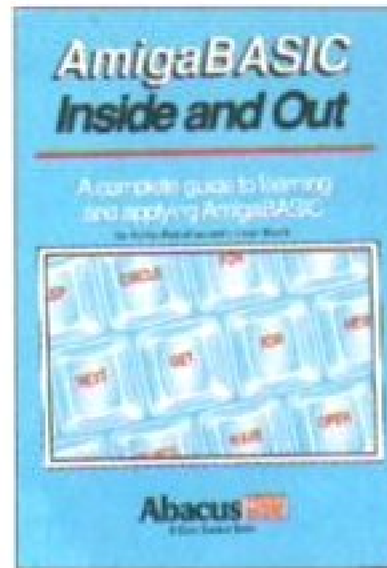


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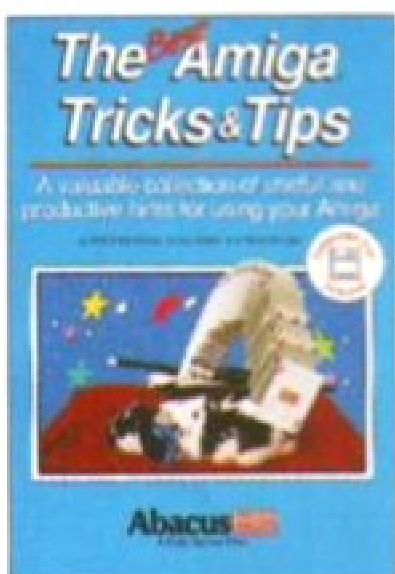
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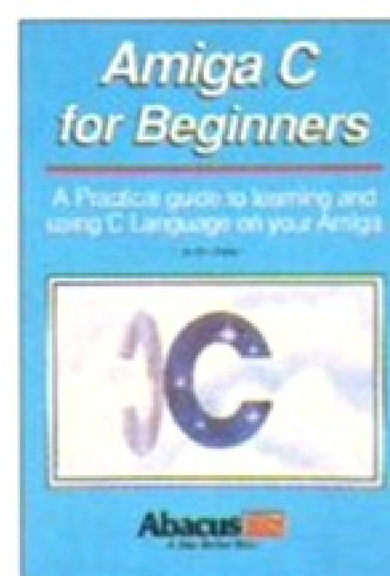
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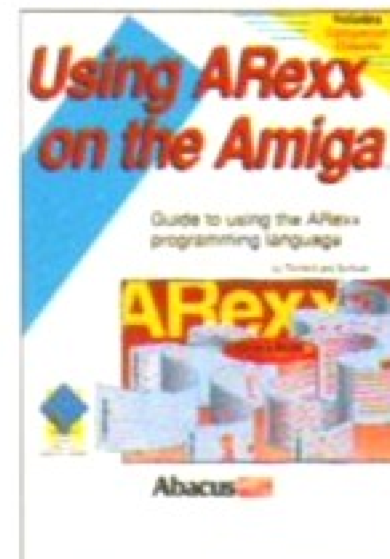


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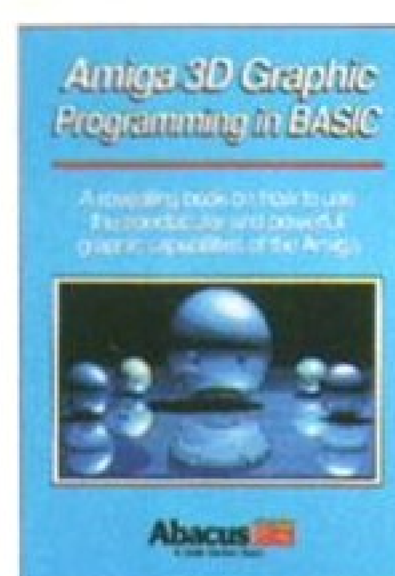
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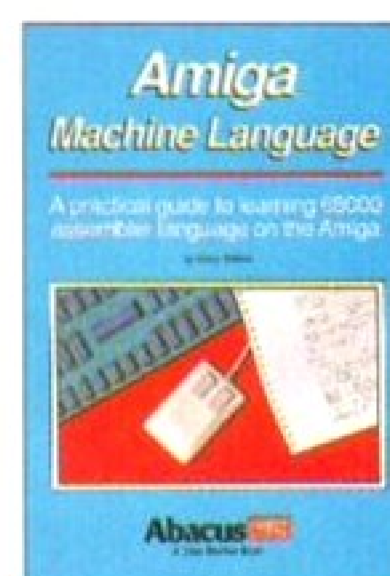


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If you've a tip, cheat, map or solution to a hot game then send it in to us here. Simply write the name of the game that the cheat is for on the front of the envelope followed by our dear old address: **GAMEBUSTERS, Amiga Format, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.** *Deluxe Paint* maps are very welcome, as you will see from Adam's excellent winning entry! However, we can't return any disks, so please don't send in your originals, make a copy first!

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...The Pulitzer, Booker and Nobel Prize for Literature can only be around the corner, but before it all goes to our Maff's head let's get on with some serious cheating and tipping.

KILLING CLOUD



If you think you're a bit of a hot-shot future-cop, who can handle that flying-through-the-fog stuff, then why are you so wasteful with PUPs and nets? Well never mind all the various excuses for now, just try this tip instead.

When the game comes up with the screen that asks you for a mission code, just type in: 1KILLING. You should then be furnished with 28 PUPs and 28 nets. Now you can waste them as much as you want.

Philip Delaney,
Tavistock, Devon

VAXINE



We gave away this great game on the Coverdisk (check out Issue 24 from the back issues if you are lacking a copy) then you may be in need of a tip by now. Luckily enough we have one right here...

Start the game as normal and type in WILDEBEESTE. Now you can use the following keys to skip levels:

F1	**Advances one level**
F2	**Retreats one level**
F3	**Advances 10 levels**
F10	**Advance one level and you gain a bonus.**

Ian Cushion,
Wirral, Merseyside

SWITCHBLADE 2



It's a bit tough, this futuristic platform romp. If you don't feel confident enough to battle through the levels of your own accord then try this cheat.

When the title screen appears, type in LEVEL and the number of the stage you want to start from. Want some more? Well try typing CHROME instead of the cheat and you will find a secret sub-game.

Matthew Priestley,
Goudhurst, Kent

PANG

We printed quite a few tips on this... ooh, way way back! I bet what you are all really after, though, is a cheat. Ah! thought as much. Well try this one for size.

When the map screen appears, type in WHAT A NICE CHEAT (including the spaces). The map will turn purple and you are able to travel to any location in the world. Obviously to do this to the map you will have to finish typing the cheat before it disappears, so you've got to be quick!

Marianne Badiola,
Wandsworth, London

Elvira – Mistress of the Dark



£50

The sequel is just around the corner, so it's time we put frustrated Elvira fans, having trouble with the original, out of their misery. Here is a solution with some maps to help you along.

THE SOLUTION

Proceed towards the Souvenir Shop, collecting some hay from outside the stable on the way. At the Souvenir Shop, take the large (not the small) shield and USE it. Once activated, the shield will remain in use until it is dropped or replaced with a larger shield.

Enter the castle and go to the Armoury. Take the crossbow and obtain another weapon (a sword's best).

Then go to the Library and remember to take the magic book.

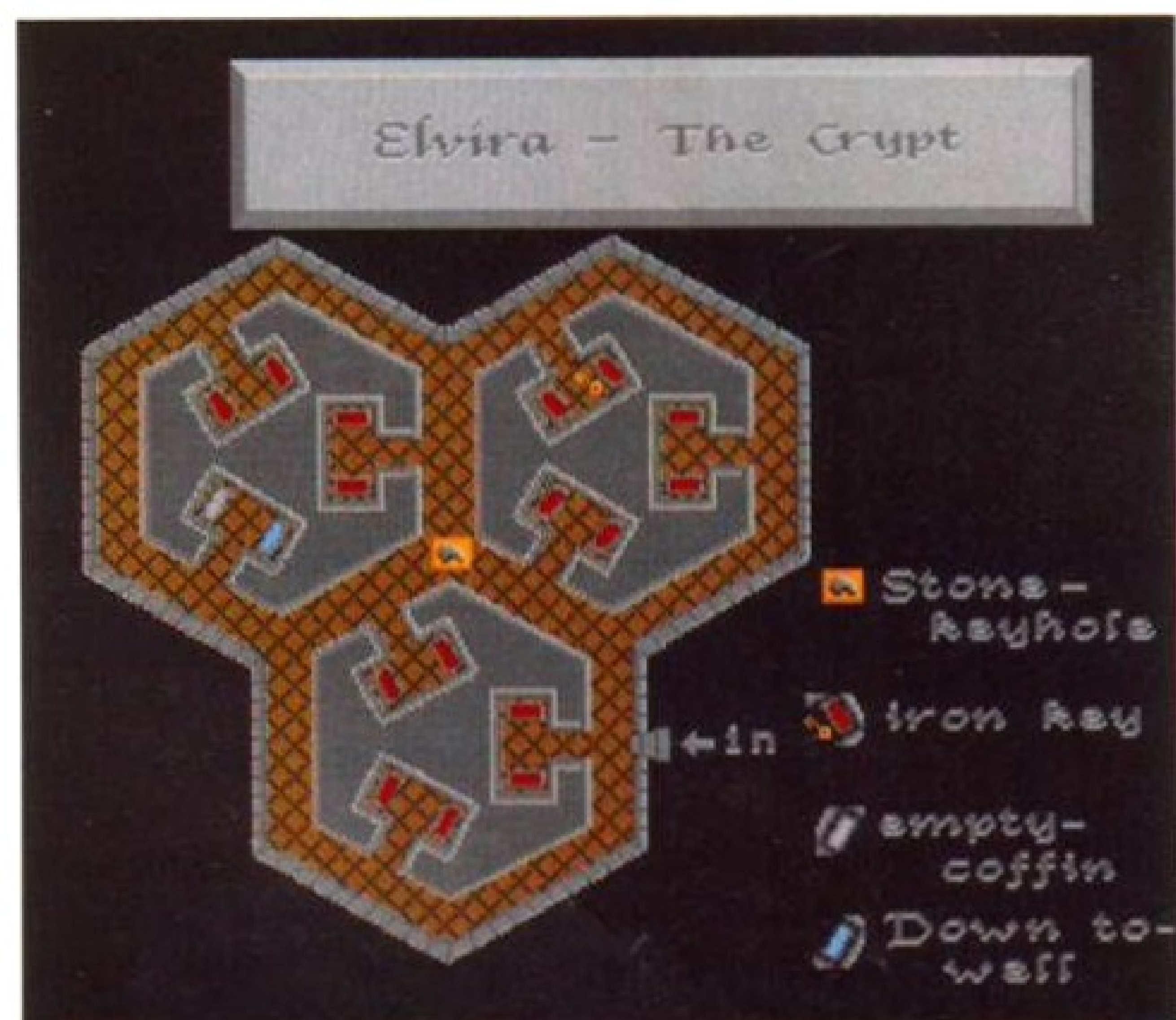
Go to the Kitchen. Take the honey with you from the pantry and mix it with the hay to make the Herbal Honey spell. USE the spell and it will allow you to recognise all the herbs in the Gardens.

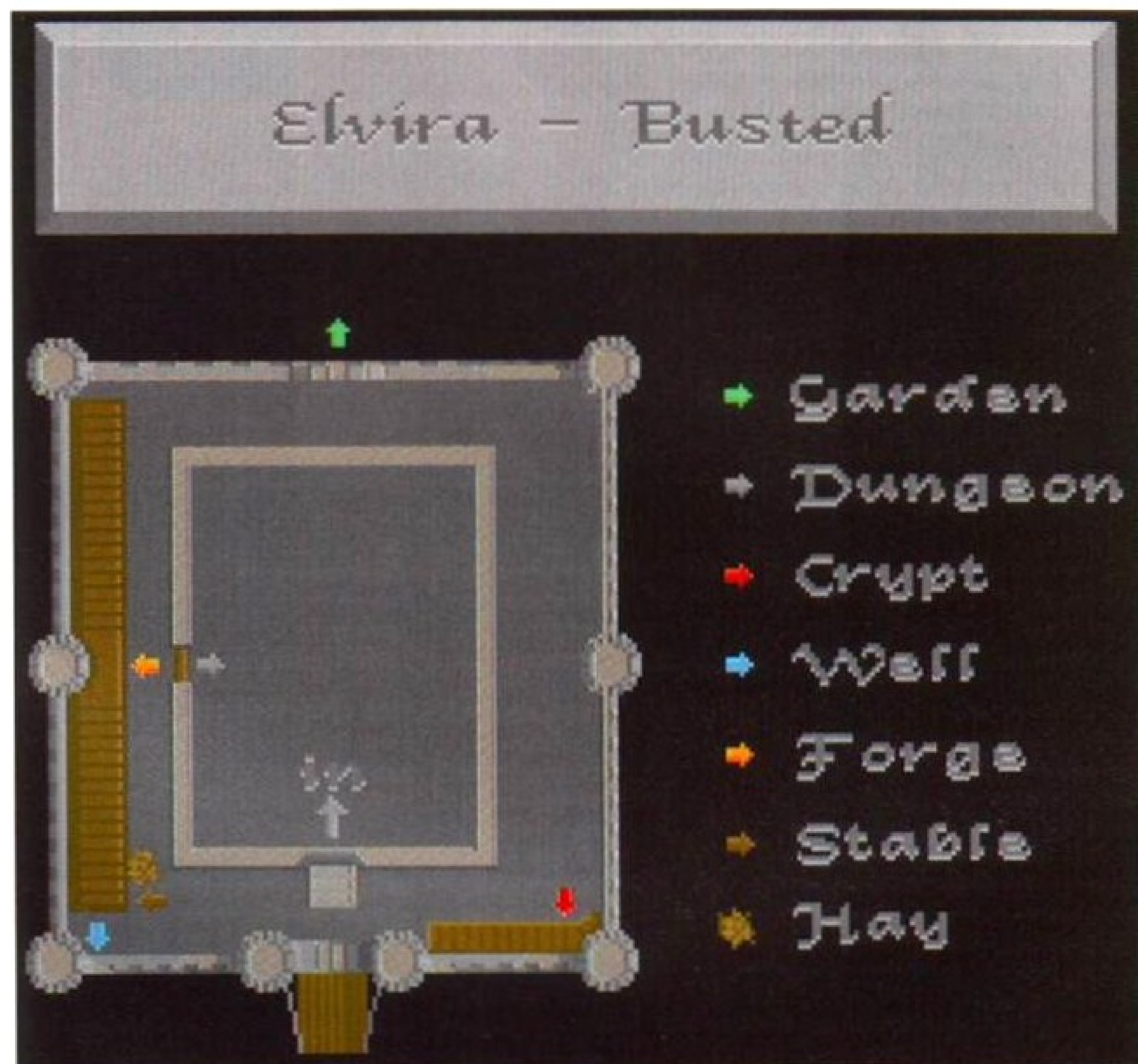
Go upstairs and search the bedrooms for crossbow bolts, but don't go into the Vampire's room yet.

Go to the Garden Shed and collect the key, hammer and silver cross. Also, collect magic ingredients (poppy maggots, etc) both there and along the way.

Leave the Garden Shed and go to the Herb Garden, collecting ingredients (mushrooms, etc) along the way. En route to the Herb Garden, take the opportunity to improve your bow skills by using the Archery Target until "message of improvement" is received. You will have to fight to enter the Garden, then open the Garden gate with the key you found in the Garden Shed.

Return to the castle and enter the Living Room to get the stake and more of the ingredients (fern, etc).





Go upstairs and enter the Vampire's Room. USE the stake and then take the vampire's dust and the crossbow bolts.

Go into the Blue Bedroom. Search all of the drawers to find a Bible. In the Bible is a prayer scroll. If you look around Upstairs, you'll find more crossbow bolts in some of the other rooms.

Return to the Kitchen and MIX as many spells as possible. If the cook is there, she must be destroyed. You need salt to do this, which is found in the Torture Chamber. When the cook is dead, Elvira will take her place in the kitchen. At this point, turn to face the dumb waiter. Give Elvira a Glowing Pride spell, then you can wait for her to get the FIRST KEY for you.

Go to the Meadow (outside the Herb Garden) and kill the falcon with the crossbow. Take the SECOND KEY, the feather and retrieve your crossbow bolt.

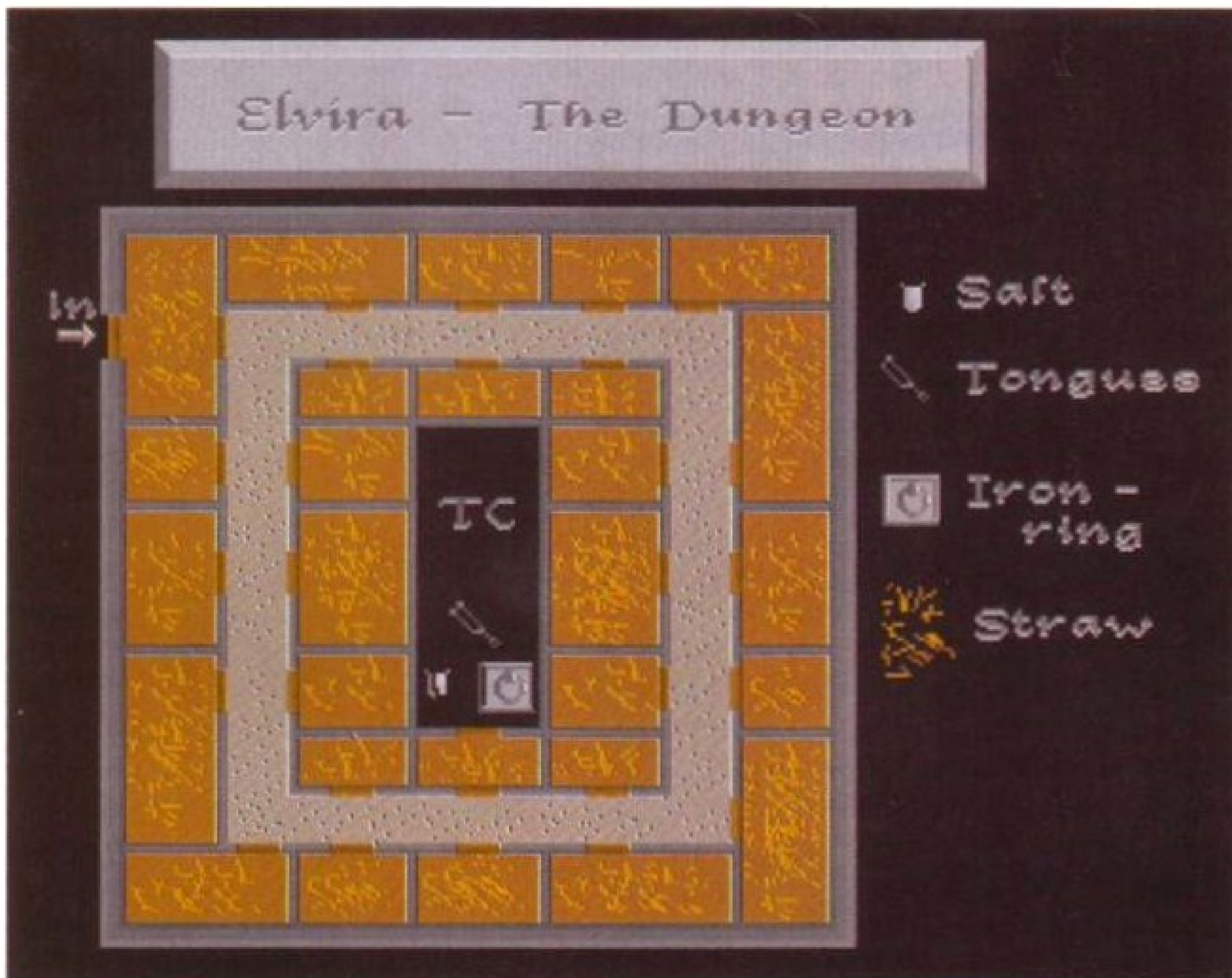
Enter the maze and get the bird's egg. Make your way towards the centre of the maze, but don't enter into any hand-to-hand combat with the maze creatures, what you must try and do is either use the crossbow or magic spells to fight them, or avoid them altogether. Find the lily pond in the centre of the maze and take all all of the items.

Now here you will need to find the nest, which is nearby. The maze creatures are rather sneaky, notorious thieves, so any items that you might have had stolen from you along the way will be in the nest, so make sure you take them back! Elvira's lost ring can also be found in the nest. If there are 'eyes' in the nest when you arrive, simply cast a spell on the nest to destroy the remaining creatures.

Make your way back down the stairs to the Chapel and then insert Elvira's ring in the cross, then take the prayer book with the Manticore Hide inside.

Enter the Chamber that is under the altar in the Chapel and then face the Crusader Wall and USE the prayer scroll. Put the crown on the Crusader's head and take the holy sword, then USE it.

Go up to the battlements and fight until you meet the Grey Knight (an archer) who has another key. Fire a crossbow bolt at him and he will fall over the battlements into the moat. Note the location of where he falls, because you'll need to find him in there later. At this point, you should return to the Castle to



replenish magic spells and/or make up new ones if you need them

Enter the Dungeon and search for the magic ingredients (earwigs, caterpillars, etc) in the jail cells. Then go into the Torture Chamber and lift the ring on the floor, but don't touch anything else, just take the bones and the THIRD KEY.

Enter the Catacombs and explore the various Burial Chambers. Find the coffin containing the iron key and take it. In another chamber find the empty coffin and put the bones inside it. Remember that the other coffin in this room is the entrance to the moat – but do not attempt to open this coffin until you have the iron key.

Return to the Torture Chamber and take the tongs and then go to the Well Room. Be sure, though, to check that the well rope is in the 'Down' position.

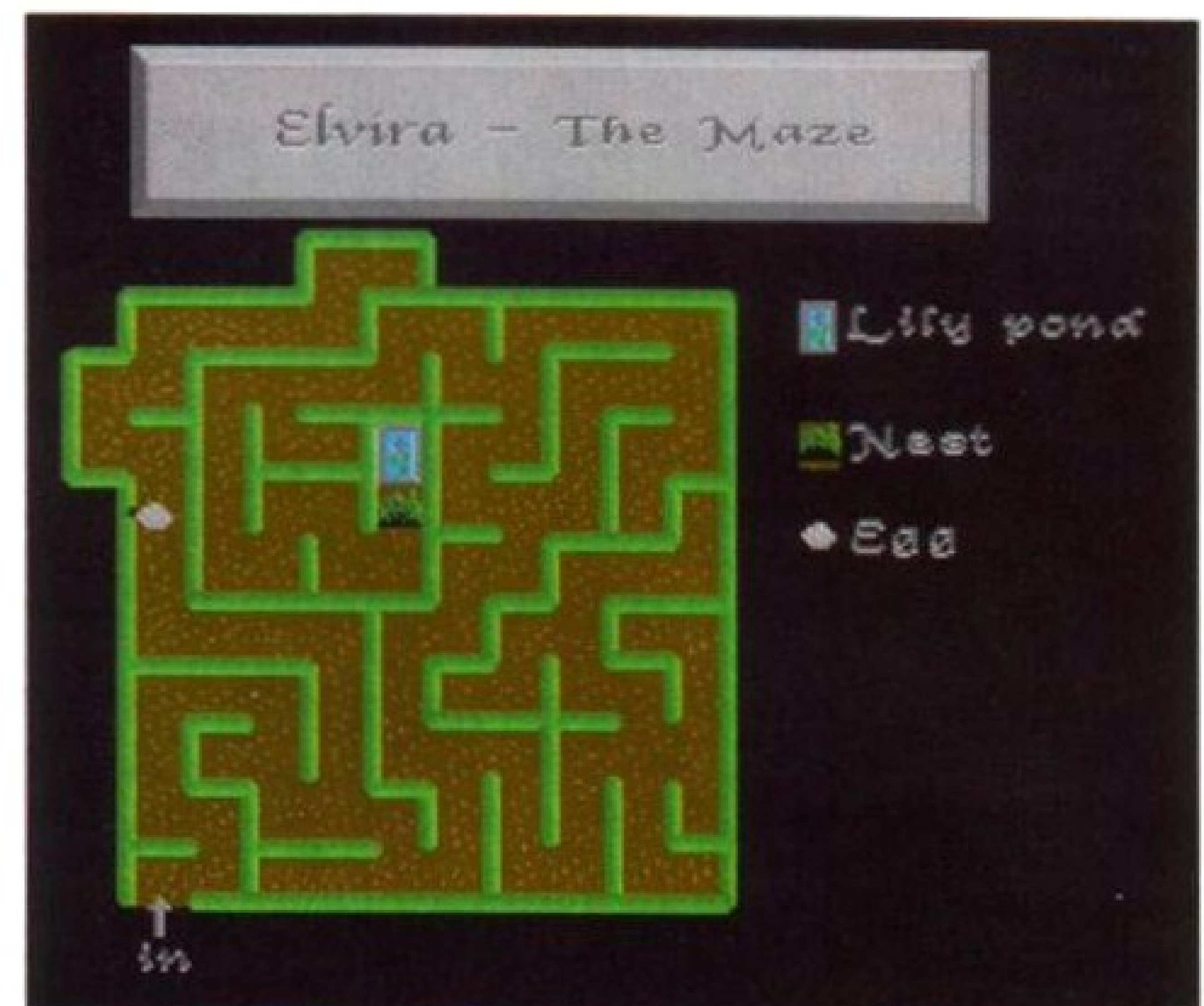
Make your way back to the catacombs. If you meet the monster with the stone, slay him and take the stone. Enter the Burial Chamber where you left the bones. Now you can open the other coffin. The room will flood, so swim down until you find a place to swim up (this is when the up arrow is highlighted). You should now be in the bottom of the Well, so swim up for air or you will drown. Swim down again, and then towards the grill at the other end of the tunnel. Unlock the grill and enter the moat. You then must find the slain Grey Knight and obtain the FOURTH KEY. Return to the bottom of the Well and go up and take the moss from the Well.

Go to the Foundry and find the crucible in the wooden box and take it. Place the silver cross in the crucible which you then place in the fire to melt the cross. Dip a crossbow bolt in the molten silver. Go back to the Kitchen and USE the tongs to take the hot coal from the fire and make your way to the Third Tower. Light the cannon wick with the coal which will then blow the Fourth Tower to smithereens.

Now make your way to the Stable and kill the werewolf with the silver bolt, enabling you to obtain the FIFTH KEY from behind the stone with the ring in the last stall. There is now only one key left to obtain: this you must take from the Captain of the Guard.

Go to the Armoury and get the armour, but be sure to CONSUME strength potions before you put it on, otherwise you may be left immobile. Drop any unnecessary items and CONSUME dexterity potions. Enter the Captain's Room and attack the captain with magic to reduce his effectiveness. Use any magic that increases your hit points – Palmlight, Fingerlight, Demon's Brew, and anything else that will weaken him, then defeat him by hand-to-hand combat. Take the bulletin off the Captain's bulletin board then take the SIXTH KEY. You should now have all of the keys.

Go to the destroyed tower (you know, the one you blew away with the cannon) and you will find a chest. Open the chest using the keys in the correct order (this can be determined by examining each key). In the chest you'll find a dagger and a scroll. Take them but do not use them yet.



Go to the Catacombs and find the stone impression on the floor (this is located at the 'Y' juncture in the passageway). Insert the stone key that you obtained from the monster into the impression, doing this will open a secret passageway. Enter the passage – but be sure you've taken all available health potions first! If you do meet Emelda's handmaidens, just remember that they can only be destroyed by using magic.

At the very end of the corridor, Emelda will confront you. If you do nothing, she will just drain your Life Force. All you have to do to kill her is simply place the Crusader's sword in the pentangle, then USE the scroll that you found in the chest. Finally, stab Emelda to death with the dagger.

The quest will now be complete and you can sit back and enjoy Elvira's display of gratitude. Fnarr Fnarr!

**Solution from
Oscar Lindahl,
Munka Ljungby, Sweden**

**Maps from
Adam Morley,
Stoney Gate, Leicestershire**

LOCATION OF MAGIC INGREDIENTS

INGREDIENT	LOCATION
Absinthe	Bar
Aconite	Herb Garden
Algae	Centre of Maze
Beetles	Dungeon
Belladonna	Garden Path
Bird's Feather	Falcon
Bleeding Heart Flower	Herb Garden
Bird's Egg	Maze
Black Lotus	Centre of Maze
Blood Lily	Centre of Maze
Bloodroot	Herb Garden
Centipedes	Dungeon
Dandelion	Herb Garden
Dogwood	Garden Path
Dragon's Blood	Burial Chamber
	(hole in skull above door)
Earwigs	Dungeon
Elderberries	Herb Garden
Fern Living	Room
Flame Flower	Backyard Path
Firethorn	Backyard Path
Four Leaf Clover	Backyard Path
Hawthorn	Backyard Path
Hay	Outside Stables
Hellabore	Herb Garden
Honey	Pantry

INGREDIENT	LOCATION
Horsehair	Stables
Ivy	Battlements
Laudnum	Bathroom (Hole in Wall)
Lily	Centre of Maze
Lily Leaf	Centre of Maze
Maiden Tree Leaves	Backyard Path
Maggot	Garden Shed (Dead Gardener's throat)
Manticore Hide	Chapel (Prayer Book)
Mistletoe	Backyard Path
Monsters	Living Room
Moss	Well
Mushrooms	Backyard Path
Nettles	Maze
Nightshade	Backyard Path
	(by Shed)
Parsley	Herb Garden
Plantain	Herb Garden
Poppy	Outside Herb Garden
Red Wine	Kitchen (Pantry)
Rose	Herb Garden
Spider Webs	Dungeon
Thistle	Maze
Vampire's Dust	Vampire's Room
	(left after vampire IS killed)
White Wine	Kitchen (Pantry)
Witch Hazel	Herb Garden

Helping Hand

The column for those in-the-know: gamers who know the cheats, and those not-so-in-the-know: gamers who don't know the cheats. Mercs and Persian Gulf are the hit cheats...

Round and Round

Please could you include me in the Gamebusters helpline. I desperately need a cheat or some passwords for *Rotor*.

Ian Robertson,
London

Consider yourself included. Here are some codes for the higher levels:

1 - GAG	4 - MEN
2 - LIP	5 - AWE
3 - SLY	6 - TNT

If you want to gain access to the battle computer then use the code PIT.

Caribbean Holiday

I have recently bought a copy of Delphine's excellent *Cruise for a Corpse* and have reached a point where I can progress no further. I've searched everywhere and have only found a receipt for a bracelet and a note concerning a rendezvous at the bar. Can you help me get into the game in more depth?

Karl Vassallo,
Fakenham, Norfolk

You've just got about all you can at this point, but it's what you do with the items that is important. Go to the bar and access your inventory. Select the piece of paper you found in Karaboudjan's office and show it to the barman. He should give you Father Fabiani's prayer book, which you should search to find a letter. Once you've done that go to the dining room and chat to the priest. Hope this gets you on the right track!

Deeper and Down

I have a game called *Infestation* by Psygnosis and I can't get anywhere! I walk or fly about until I run out of Oxygen and die. Any chance of a cheat?

Dermot Corkey,
Belfast, Northern Ireland

Not a cheat, but a hint. It seems like you're missing the point somewhat. The idea is to get into the complex below the surface. To do this, find the terminal at about coordinates 90,30 and enter the name KAL SOLAR. If you now go to the teleport at coordinates 50,50 you can walk through in the direction of the arrows to enter the complex. The original Screenplay *book has tips and a full set of maps*

Robot Neurosis

Is there a cheat for *Paradroid 90* that will let me start from any ship you like, because it's a right pain starting from the second ship every time you reload.

Stephen Creek,
Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire

Sorry Stephen, but nobody here knows of any kind of cheat for Paradroid. *I'm a fan of the game myself, so if anyone does know of a cheat, they could find themselves a voucher winner. Send those replies in now! Anyway after a plea in Issue 27 for some* Persian Gulf Inferno *tips, here is a collection of hints from Christopher Latham in Derby. Take it away Chris...*

Putting Out Fires

£25

I take it that everyone can manage to find the shotgun on floor seven, the key-card on floor five and some ammo. Go down to floor one to collect the elevator card and then up to floor two. Go out of the first building and at the first stairway go up to floor nine, where you find the first hostages. Go down two floors and turn left, keep walking and shooting until you reach the next stairway. When you are here go down three floors, then left, find the stairs and go up six floors to floor ten. Find the elevator card to the left and the hostages to the right.

To open the door, the key card from floor two is needed, but to save time for now just blow up the door using explosives. You will need the key card later, though! The hostages will tell you to go down four floors, then left and to find the lift. Go up a floor and search on the left for hostages. They tell you to go down four floors, then left, up two floors via the stairs, left again and in through the first door you come to. Here you will find Doctor Feelgood, who will patch you up and return your hits to zero. He will also tell you where to find the girl.

Take the lift up seven floors, turn left to the stairway leading up and go to floor 14 to find the girl. She will tell you that the bomb is on floor 17, but you first need to find Professor Joe. Go down four, left, find the other lift and up to floor 12. Get the last elevator card then go up to floor 13 where you will find Prof Joe, he will tell you to cut the GREEN wire. Take the lift all the way up, turn right and walk to the last lift. Go up one to floor 18, turn left and just hope that you've got enough ammo! Keep walking left to the stairs, go down one floor and go through the door to find the bomb. Defuse it to win the game.

Congratulations Chris. That should help Persian Gulf *fans a lot!*

Have Mercy!

I recently bought the US Gold game *Mercs*, but I keep getting killed. Can you suggest a cheat to skip levels or give me infinite lives?

Ian Hadley,
Newport, Gwent

£25

Well there is a cheat of sorts, and it has been sent in by Robert Chattoe from Stafford. Unfortunately, to access it you have to be able to reach level five.

Once there, though, go to the very right of the screen – just before you reach the tank. There you will find a hedge blocking your way, so blast it until it explodes. Now you will be able to enter a secret area packed with pick-ups, including a clown's head. Pick up the head to be blessed with a mega-powerful weapon which kills everything on contact. That should make short work of the enemies!

Team Spirit

After reading L Ellis' plea for help on *Team Yankee*, a flood of letters have come in. Send units one–to–three to the left of the battlefield to cross the river and hit the first objective, making smoke as they go. Position unit four at the top edge of the woods on the lower-right to take out any Russians in the village. All enemy activity seems to take place on the right of the objectives, so if teams one–to–three move to the right of the first objective they can pick off the enemies and go to the second target.

This is where most people have problems! When it seems as if you've completed the mission, nothing happens. What you have to do now is find the cross-roads in the dead centre of the wood. Follow the road into the wood until you find the intersection and take out the two enemy tanks. By then you should have completed the task.

Here We Go Again...

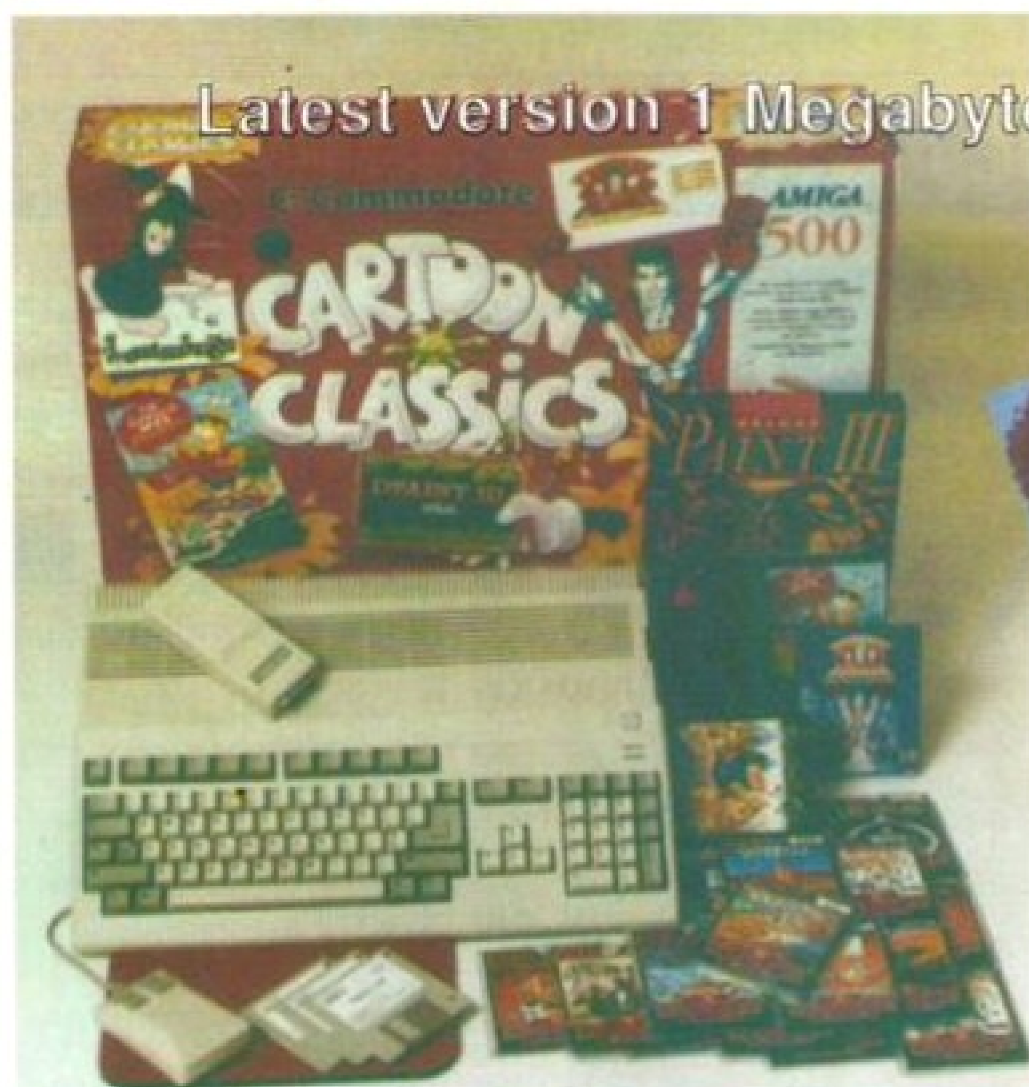
A number of letters have come in asking for hints and solutions that have appeared from the following: *Fantasy World Dizzy* from Alex Pye, *The Simpsons* from Michelle Robinson, *Dragons Lair II* from CD Tipping, *Gremlins 2* from Jonathan Man and *Time Machine* from Michelle Monay.

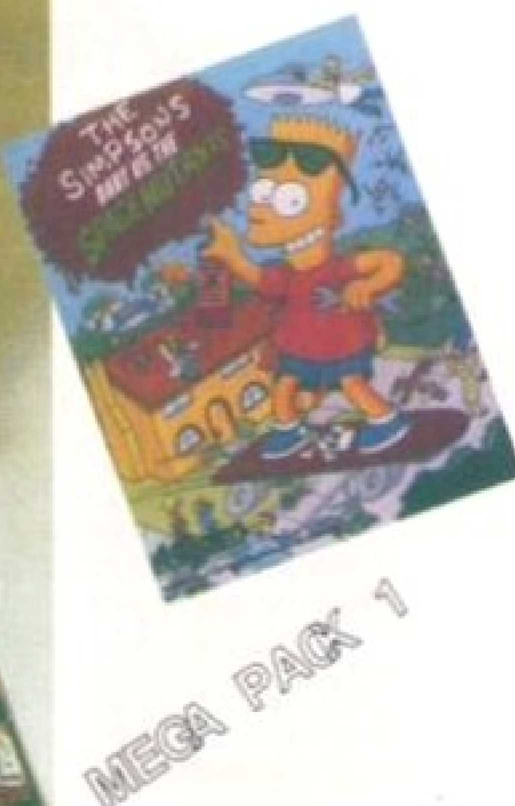
There just isn't enough space to deal with all these hints and solutions here, but tips on all of them, and of course heaps more besides, are to be found in the excellent *Screenplay 2*, yes the sequel to the original blockbusting gamebusting book. So if you want a little help with all those games that you just can't finish then keep a look out because it will be in the shops very soon!

If you're stuck on a game or have a solution to a letter printed in the magazine then write it down and send it in to us at HELPING HAND, Amiga Format, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.

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IT'S ONLY A START...

Great though *OctaMED* is, there is a new version available which has a number of improvements. We've arranged a special price for anyone who wants to upgrade to version 2. All you have to do is send back your *OctaMED* Coverdisk with a postal order or cheque for £10 (no credit cards accepted) to this address:

**Amiga Format OctaMED upgrades,
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Eight to the Bar



All you budding musicians can now get started in creating Amiga music using the OctaMED program on our Coverdisk. It may be tricky at first, so here's **Maff Evans** to give you a rather gentle introduction to the charms of eight-track Amiga tunes.

OVER THE PAST couple of years *Amiga Format* has been saying how easy it is to get into music using your machine, but the fact is that you still have to get hold of the programs to do it. Well we've come to the rescue by supplying you with your own copy of the latest Amiga music-creation system, OctaMED.

The program is basically an eight-track version of the highly succesful MED. Using this system you can play up to eight internal instruments at the same time, a feat which is pretty impressive seeing as the Amiga only has four sound channels. This has been achieved by taking the data from two tracks and playing them out through one Amiga channel. This takes some pretty hefty processing power, so the sound quality may not be quite as clear as some four-track systems. *OctaMED* contains stacks of features, which may be confusing if you're new to Amiga music. Never mind! What we're going to do here is show you how to create a simple tune, which should show you how some of the basic functions operate. You can then use this knowledge to create your own masterpieces. We can't hope to tell you how all the functions work on these pages, but you can read the doc files on the disk for a full set of instructions. These explain in detail the theory behind the program along with detailed information on all the features.

GETTING STARTED

Power-up your Amiga and insert the OctaMED disk. When the intro screen appears, press the left mouse button to load the Workbench. Click on the OctaMED icon to open a window, then select the left-hand icon to load the program.

This tutorial should give you a taster of the delights that OctaMED can offer. If you want more information, then read the documents in the Docs drawer of the disk. It may be worth printing them out (if you can) so that you've always got a set of instructions to work with).

If you reckon that you've created a masterpiece that others should hear, then why not stick them on a disk and use the OctaMED player to create a jukebox? We'd be interested in hearing what you've done, so send them in to us at the usual adress (mark your letters OctaMED Masterpieces). Have fun!

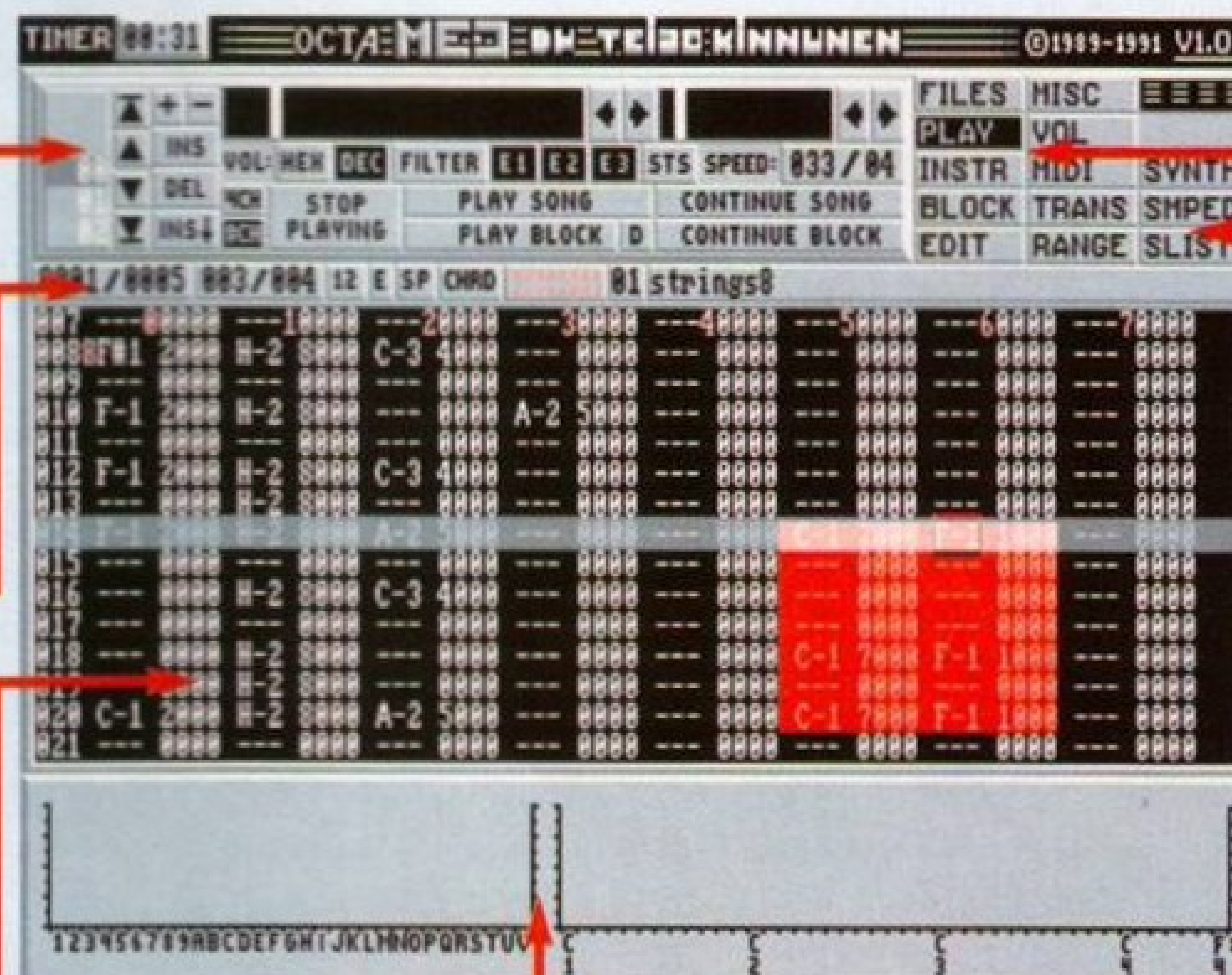
The OctaMED Screen

The screen is taken up by six areas, which are used to display the various editing panels:

Main Control Panel
This is where the main program options are selected. By calling up the required panel from the options menu, you can edit the various song parameters, move and copy blocks and load and save song and sound data.

This is where the current block, edit, song and sound information is displayed. To change numbers, you click with the mouse button on the actual digit you want to change. The left mouse button advances by one and the right mouse button steps back one.

Edit Window
This is where the serious stuff happens. This can display the note editing screen, the sample editor or the sound library and is pretty much the main work area.



The Options Menu
This contains a series of buttons which call up the file selectors, the play screen, the instrument editor, the block manipulator the MIDI panel, the colour editor and the pattern editing options.

Main Display Select
This is where most of the song creating work takes place. You can switch the display between the main note editing screen, the sample editing page and the sound storage library window.

Realtime Note Display
This displays a series of level meters to show the notes being played. The bars portray the pitch, channel and volume of the notes being played, making it easy to spot which notes are being triggered at a particular time. As well as giving you something pretty to look at while the notes are played, this enables you to spot whether sounds and notes are working properly, so that you can isolate problems within the song quickly and easily rather than having to scan the tracks note-by-note until you find the offending glitch.

Step to the Beat

Follow these (fairly) simple steps to produce an OctaMED masterpiece in hardly any time at all.

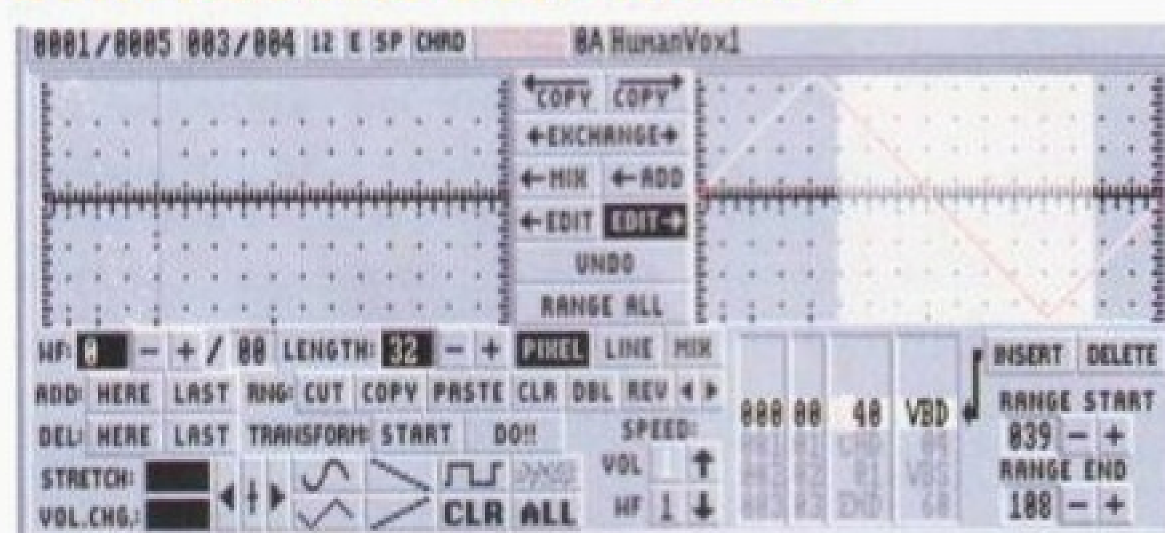
The Display Options

MAIN NOTE EDITING AREA



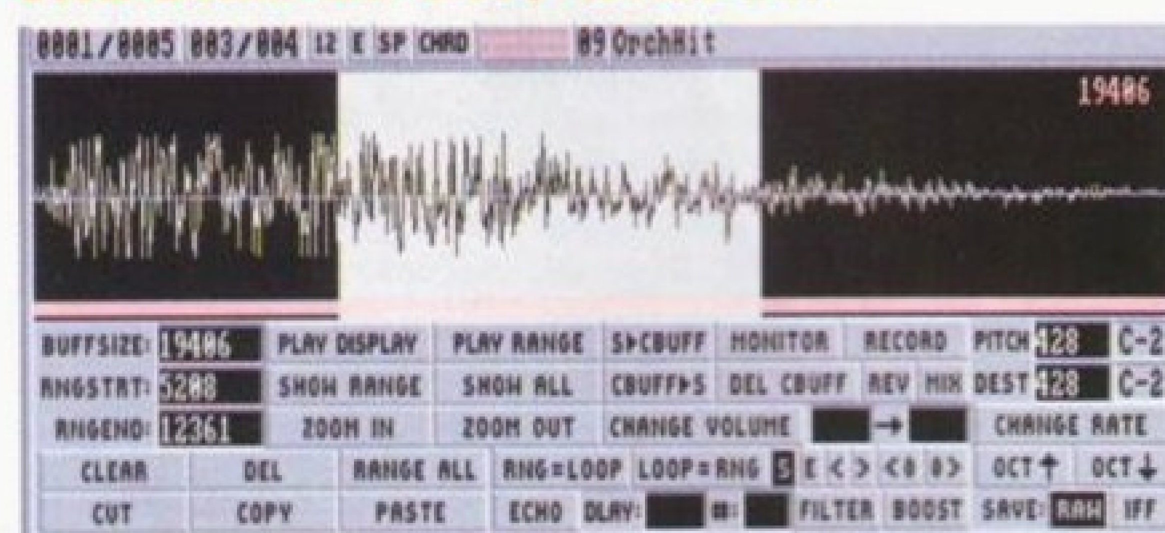
This is where all the note placing and editing on a block takes place. The window displays a grid of either four or eight tracks (depending on what mode you're in) with each track being shown as a vertical column. As well as columns to show the note data, there are also columns containing special commands such as volume change, pitch bending and effects. However, these are rather complex and could be very confusing to the *OctaMED* beginner. To learn obout these special commands you'll have to read the doc files, which contain detailed descriptions of the commands available.

SYNTHSOUND EDIT WINDOW



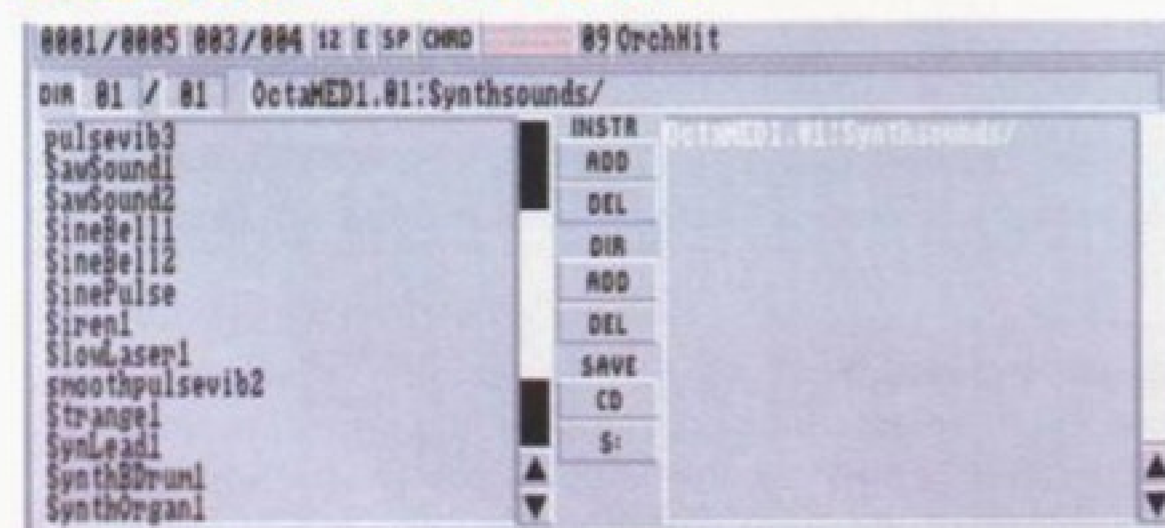
Although *OctaMED* is mainly used to play songs using internal samples and MIDI instruments, you can also use the Amiga's sound chip to create synthesiser sounds. These have a few benefits over samples, such as sound quality and low memory usage, but you can only use them in certain situations. You can also combine samples and synth sounds to create what are termed 'Hybrid' sounds. Try using the Synth edit panel to create your own sounds. If you come up with some interesting ones, it may be worth releasing them into the Public Domain for other *OctaMED* users to include in their songs.

THE SAMPLE EDIT WINDOW



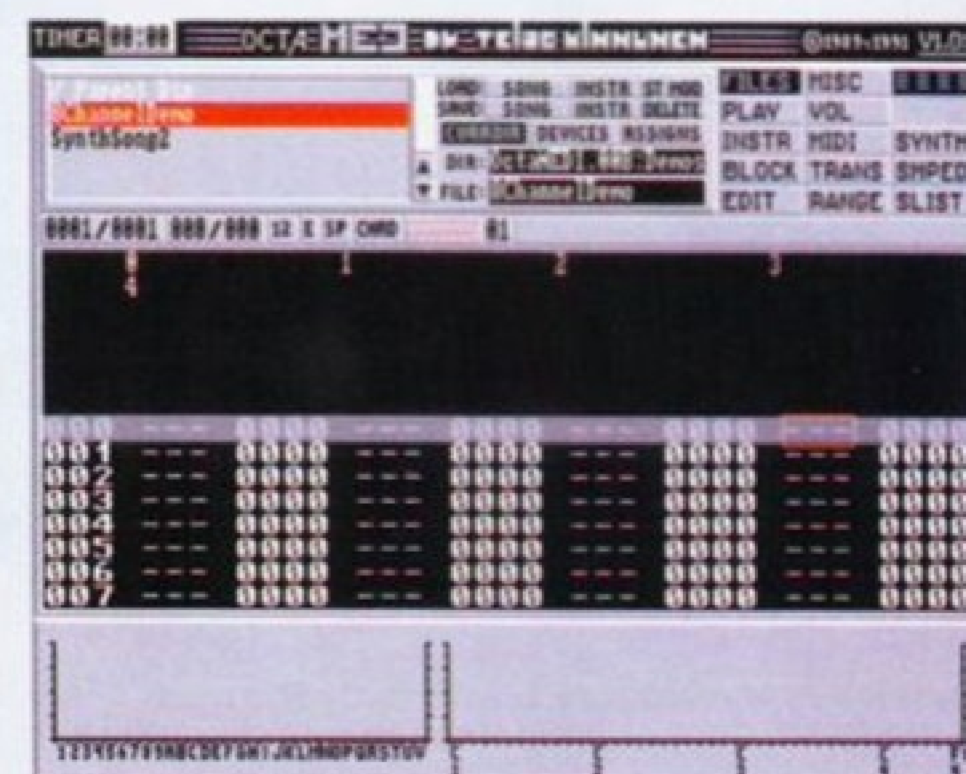
This is one feature which puts OctaMED head-and-shoulders above other budget music programs. The Sample Edit window pretty much acts as a dedicated piece of sampling software. Using this screen you can record samples (using your own hardware) then edit and tune them to use in a song. Since it samples and stores sounds straight into the right format, you can be sure that they will work properly in your song. The features included on the panel are pretty comprehensive. In fact some of the functions found here could rival a few of the full-priced sampling programs!

THE SOUND LIST PAGE

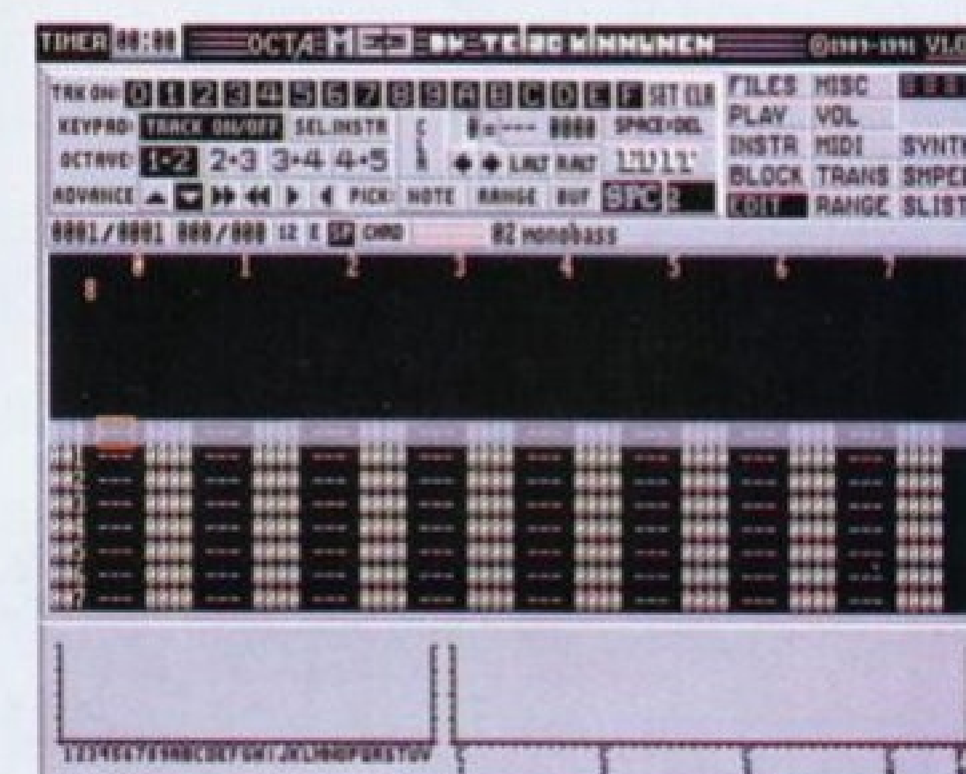


If you use the program a lot you'll soon end up with a fairly extensive collection of synthesiser sounds and samples. This could get pretty confusing, so at some point later on you'll no doubt want to organise them properly. This page allows you to set up a simple sound 'database', so that you can find the instruments you want to use with the minimum of fuss. This saves a lot of messing around looking through directory after directory on a huge stack of similar-looking disks, which is time that could be better spent actually writing a piece of music.

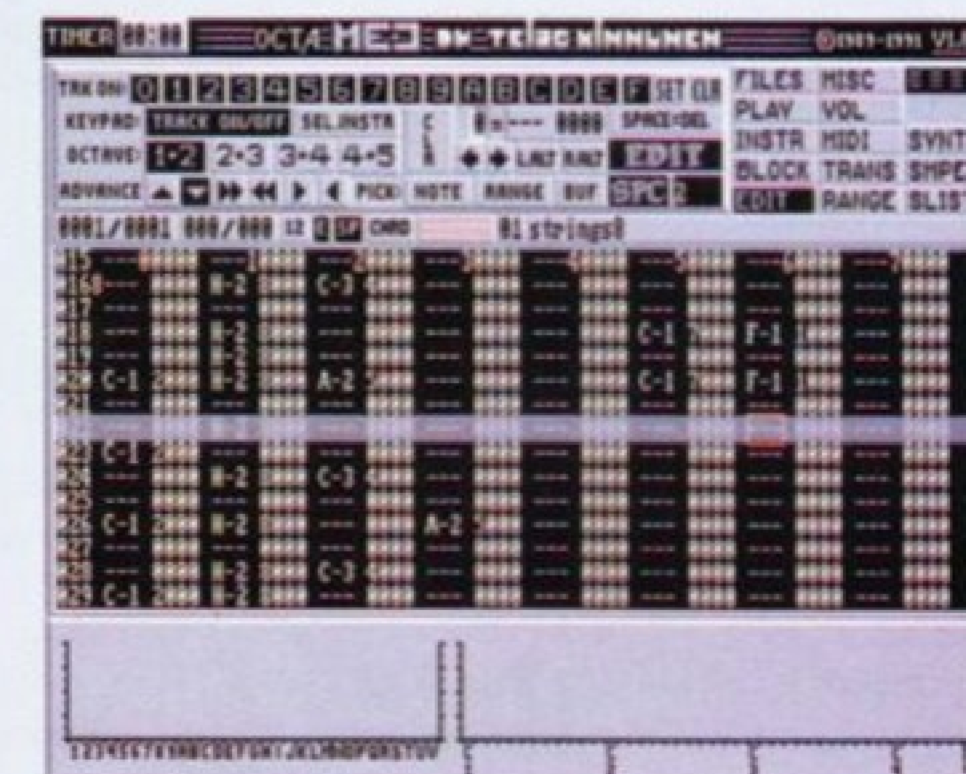
1. The first step to creating your song is to prepare some instruments. To save time we'll use a set of sounds that were used on one of the demo songs. Click on DF0: in the file window on the top left to load the directory, then select the Demos drawer and click on 8ChannelDemo. Click on LOAD:SONG to load it into memory.



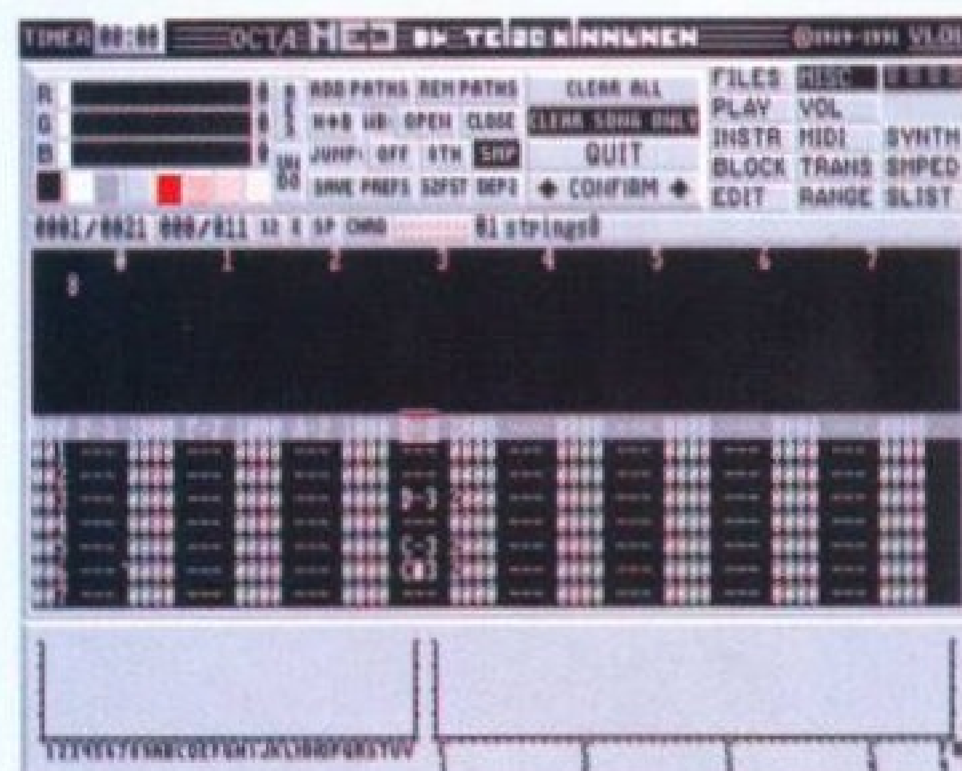
5. Select BLOCK from the Options Menu and click on TRKS: 8 to work in eight track mode. Go to the Display column and click on the top button (with the rows of dashes) to bring up the note editor, then select EDIT from the Options Menu. Set the value next to SPC as two and click on 'SPC' to highlight it. Make sure Monobass is selected, then move the cursor (using the cursor keys) to the top of track zero and press Esc.



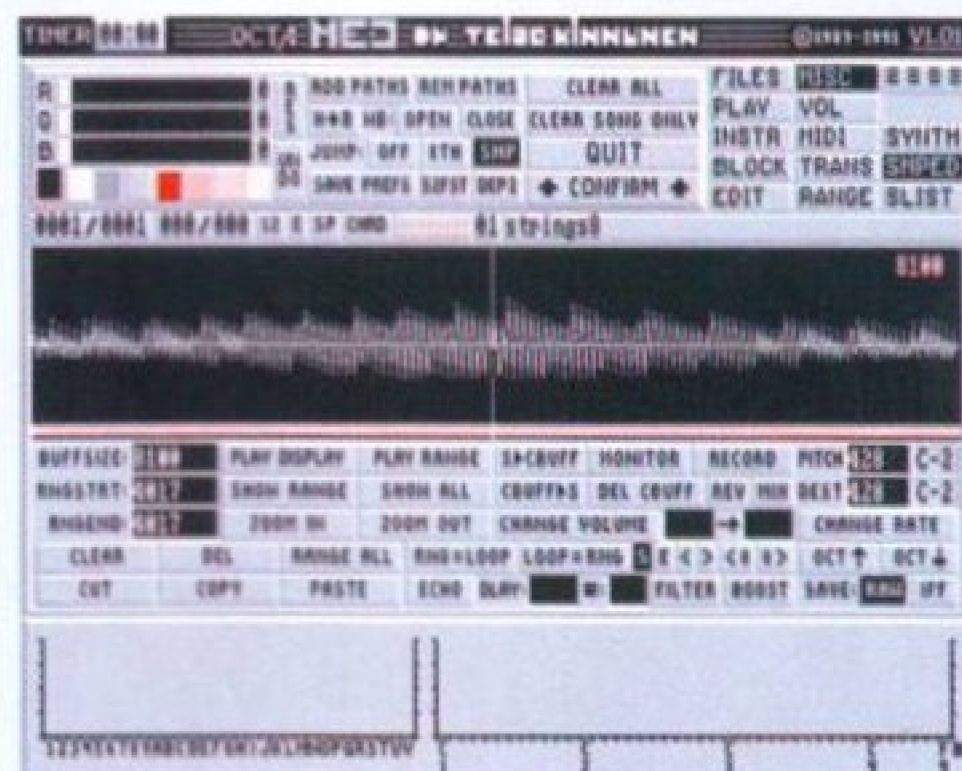
9. Now you want to create a simple pad fill to add some variety. Select OrchHit as the instrument, move to position 046 on track four and press the left square bracket (next to p). Switch the instrument to Cordpiano and move to position 014 on track five. Select EDIT from the Options Menu, set SPC to two and turn SPC on. Type `z Del zz` to enter the piano line. Switch instruments to Strings8, move to position 014 on track six and type `v Del vv`. That's the pad fill finished, so now you're just about ready to construct the song.



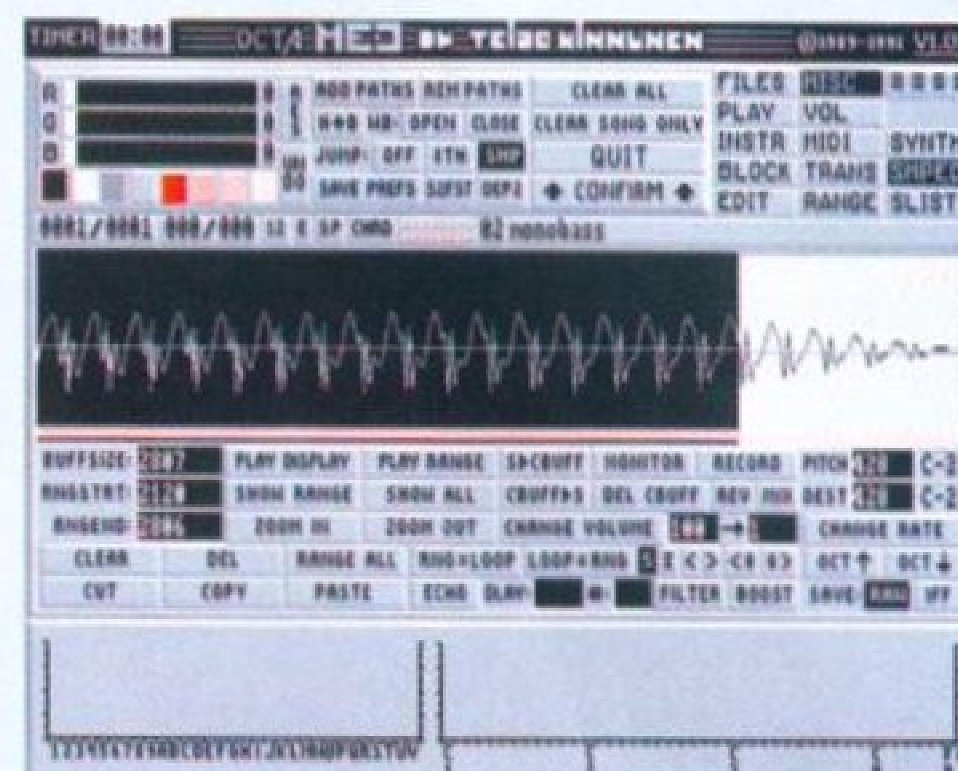
2. Click on MISC in the Options Menu, then select CLEAR SONG ONLY and CONFIRM it. This will clear all the notes from memory, but will leave the instruments intact, giving you a bank of sounds to use. The next step is to adjust the instruments to the needs of the song, which means altering a couple of the samples.



3. Click on SMPED in the Display Select column to bring up the sample editor. You should have Strings8 accessed, which is a looped sound. Click anywhere on the sample waveform with the right button and hit the LOOP=RANGE button on the panel under the waveform. This will stop the whole sound from looping.



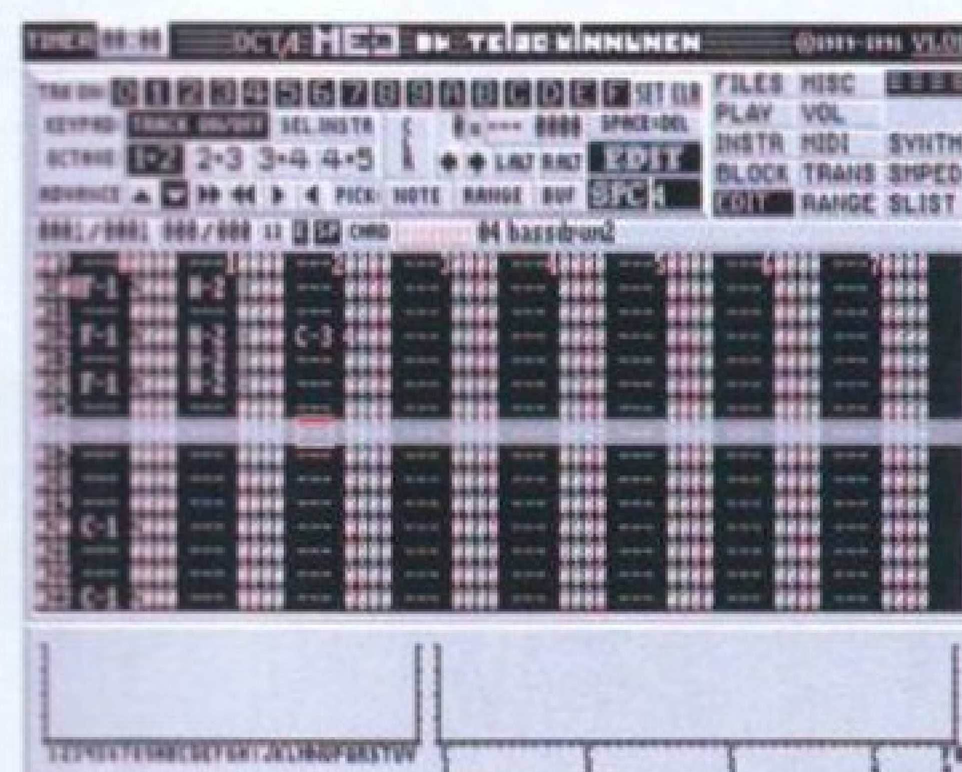
4. Call up the Monobass sound and set a bit more than the last half of the waveform as a range with the right mouse button. Click on CUT, then go to the value windows next to the Change Volume button and enter the values 100→1. Select the last quarter of the waveform as a range and click on the Change Volume button.



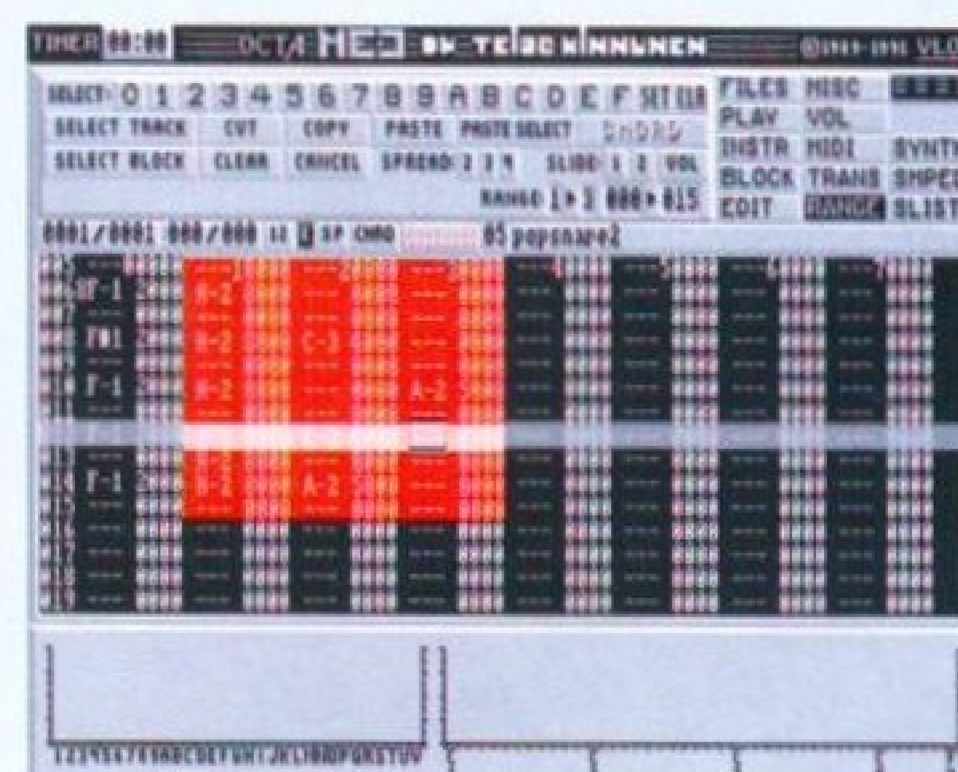
6. Now you are ready to start entering notes. This is done via the Amiga's keyboard, with the keys corresponding to a piano arrangement. Type vvvvgvvv to enter the basic bass line. Click on SPC to turn spacing off then type z at positions 20, 23, 26 and 29. Click on RANGE and click and drag with the right mouse button on the main display to highlight notes 000 to 014. Click on COPY, move the cursor to position 32 and hit PASTE.



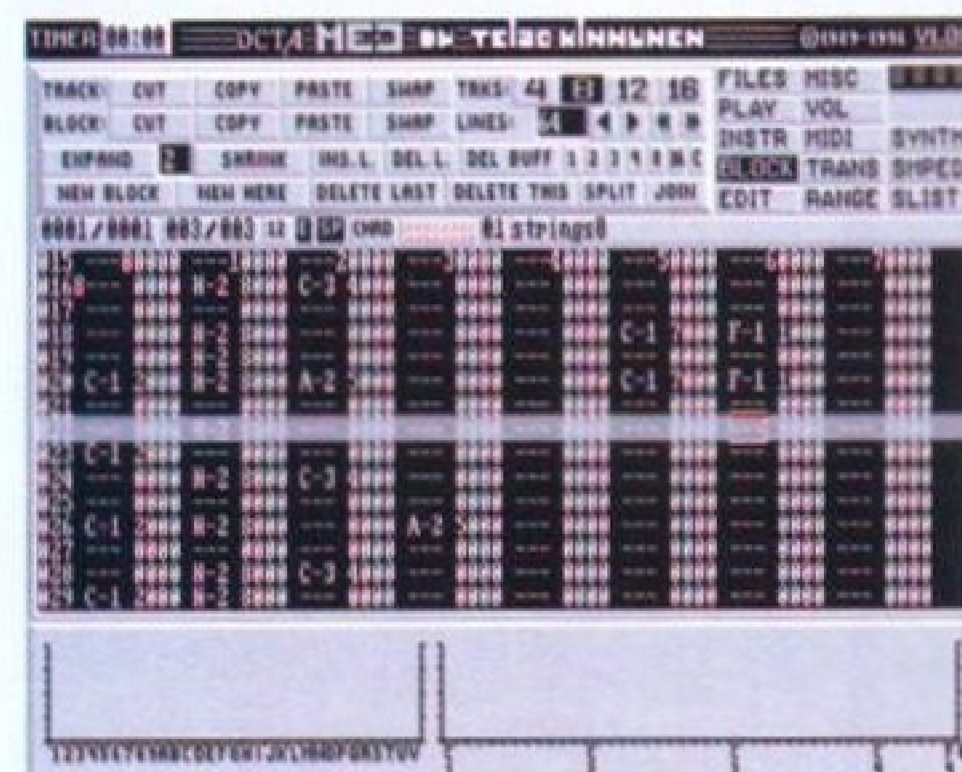
7. Select Hihat2 as your next instrument and move the cursor to the top of track one. Type u Del uuu Del u Del u Del u Del uuu. Now that the hihats are done, time for the basic rhythm. Select Bassdrum2 as your instrument and move to the top of track two. Click on EDIT in the Options Menu, set the SPC to four for a longer gap and click on the SPC button. Type i Del ii to enter the bass drum pattern.



8. Move back to the top of the track and select Popsnare2 as an instrument. Turn off SPC and type y at positions 004 and 014. Move to track three and type y at position 010. Click on RANGE on the Option Menu and use the right mouse button to set notes 000 to 015 on tracks one, two and three as a range. Click on COPY, move the cursor onto track 001 and PASTE the range at positions 016, 032 and 048. That's the drum track finished!



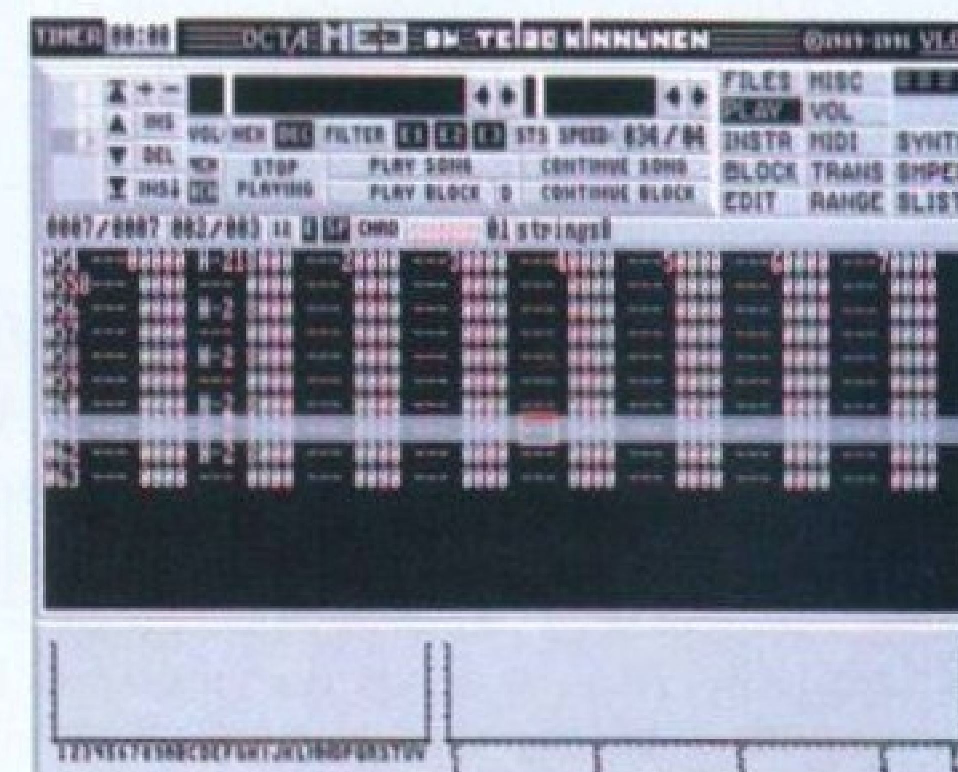
10. Select BLOCK from the Options Menu and click on NEW BLOCK three times to create three empty blocks. Click on BLOCK: COPY and select block 001 by clicking on the last digit of the 000 in the second box on the strip at the top of the Edit Window. Click on BLOCK: PASTE to put the data into the block, then move to blocks 002 and 003, using BLOCK: PASTE to hammer the data across these blocks as well. You now have four identical blocks in memory, so now you want to strip out data to break up the song.



11. Click on RANGE in the Options Menu and select block 000. Using the right-hand mouse button, drag across the Edit Window to highlight all the tracks except track zero (the bassline) as a range, then hit CLEAR to erase the data on them. Go to block 001 and use the same process to clear tracks one, two and three, but leave the other tracks alone. Next go to block 002, range tracks two, three and four and CLEAR them. Now to all the separate blocks have been defined, it's time to put them in order.



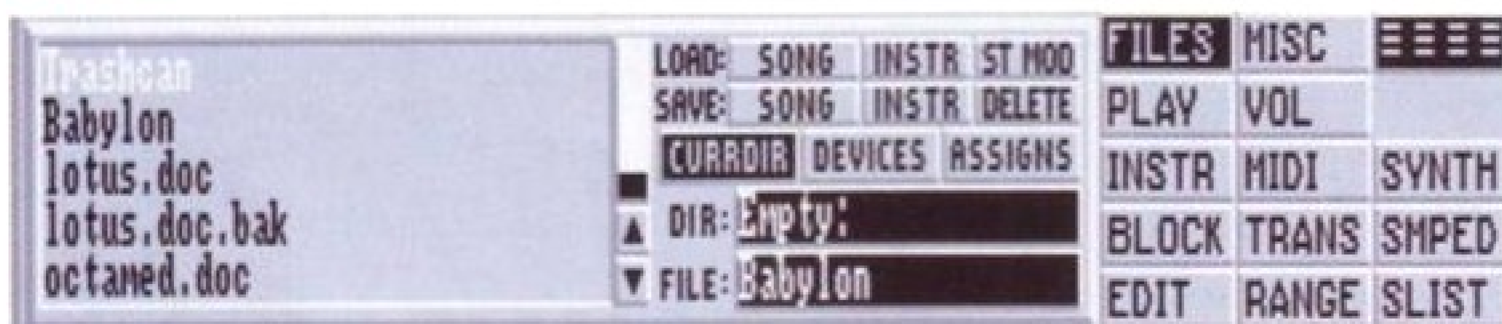
12. Select PLAY from the Options Menu, then click on INS (on the left of the panel) six times. Click on the down arrow to move one step down the column and click on the + button at the top of the panel to make the number 01. Repeat the process so that the column reads 00 01 02 03 03 03 03. Click twice on the left arrow next to the right-hand slider of the PLAY window to set the right speed, then hit PLAY: SONG. You might recognise the track which plays, so if you do why not write and tell us what you think?



Musical Tool Box

So what else can this OctaMED thing do then? Well as you've seen it can be used to easily manipulate sounds and create a tune, but there are some pretty advanced features in there for you to use. Here is a brief run down of the functions available to you.

FILES



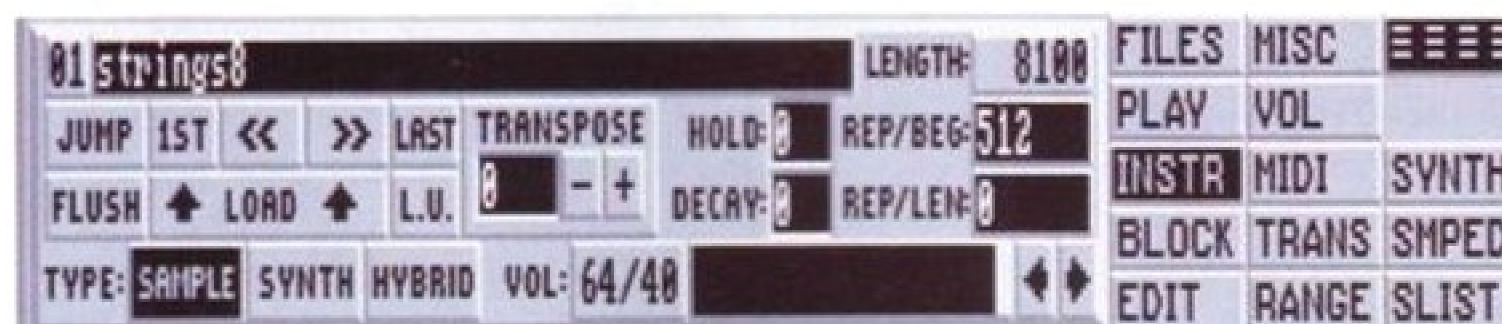
This is where all the data used with the program is loaded and saved, including song files along with separate sample and instrument data. After you've constructed a song you can save it out as a 'Module'. This is a song file which can be played by the *OctaMED* player (which is also included on the disk) rather than having to load up the main editing program. You can then distribute the tunes between your friends, so that they can hear the tunes even though they don't have *OctaMED*

PLAY



This is the panel where the options for organising the playing of your song and the individual blocks is. From here you can also set up which blocks to play in which order along with the overall speed of the track. All you have to do is use INS to stick blocks into the song stack and use the + and – buttons to set the number of the block to be played in the relevant position.

INSTR



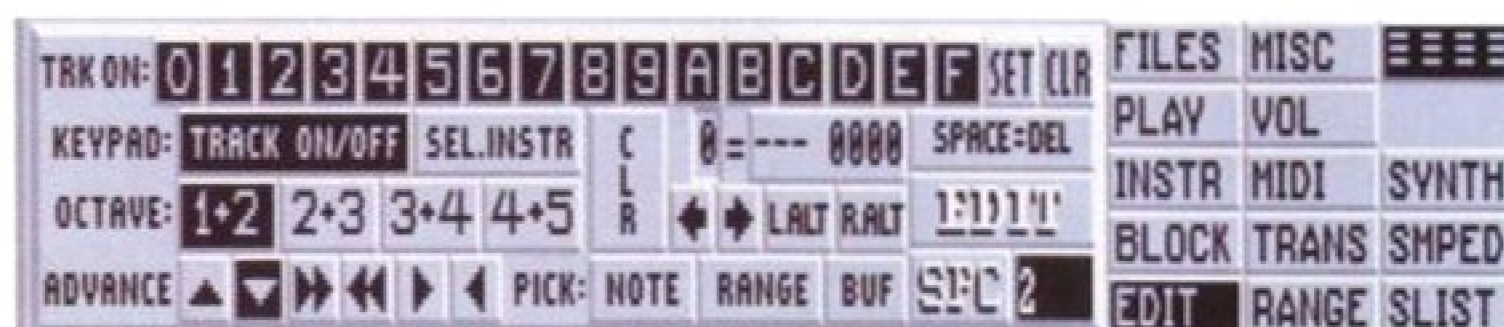
The Instrument Panel. On this panel, you can load sounds, specify what kind of sounds you wish to use and edit them to your requirements. There are three types of sound available to you - samples, synth sounds and 'Hybrids' (which are basically a combination of samples and synth sounds). You can set the form of the sound, how it is played, transpose its key and change its volume. This allows you to adjust the sounds so that they fit your track perfectly.

BLOCK



This window allows you to set up how many tracks your block will use, as well as providing options for copying, cutting and pasting data from one block to another. This is extremely useful in creating blocks to use in your song, since you can create a new block and copy all the data you need to it before editing the notes.

EDIT



The Edit Panel contains all the major editing options. Along with setting up the octave to play the song in, activating the tracks and organising the way notes will be entered into a block. You can switch the editing on and off, move around the Edit Window and set the note spacing, all from this panel.

MISC



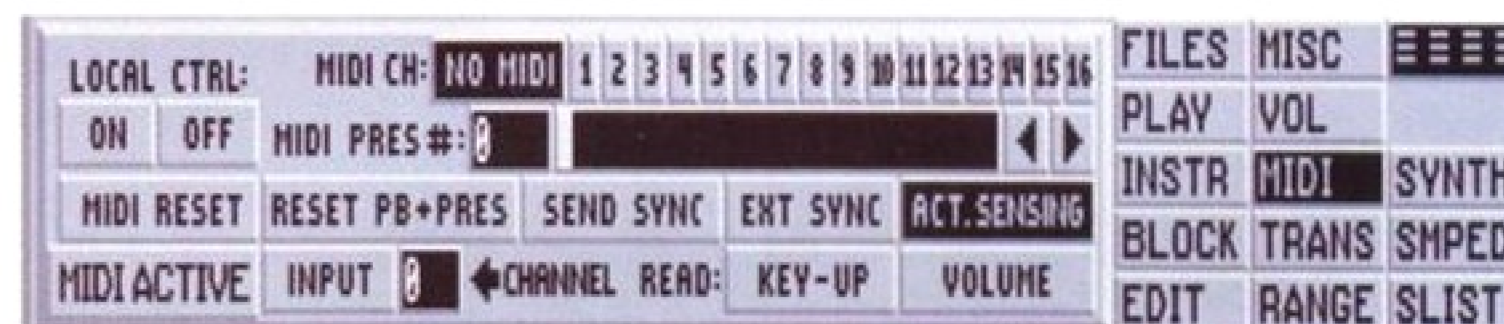
This is basically the 'overall options page' of the program (much like a Preferences screen). From here you can clear songs, wipe note information or even alter the screen colours, allowing you to start with a fresh sheet on a customised set-up.

VOL



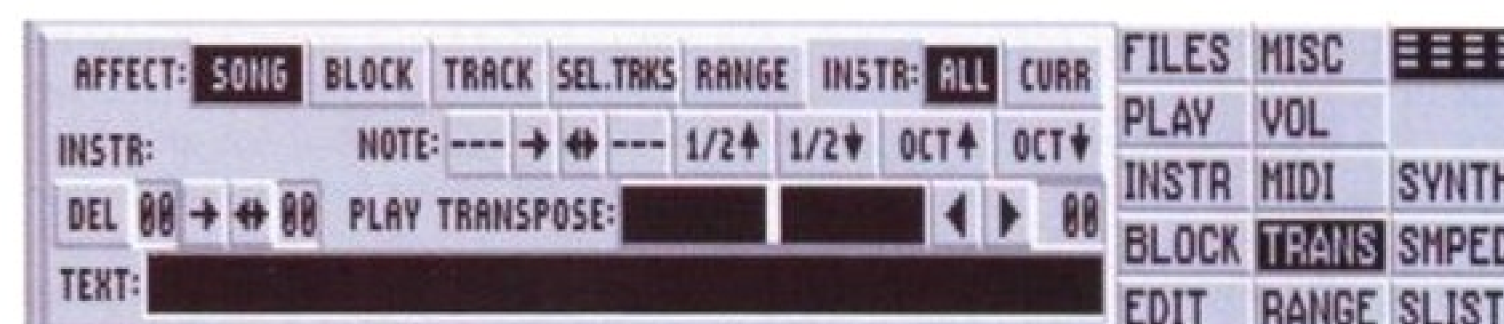
This is the Volume section and is pretty much the 'mixer' page. On this panel you can set the overall volume of a song along with the relative volume of each track.

MIDI



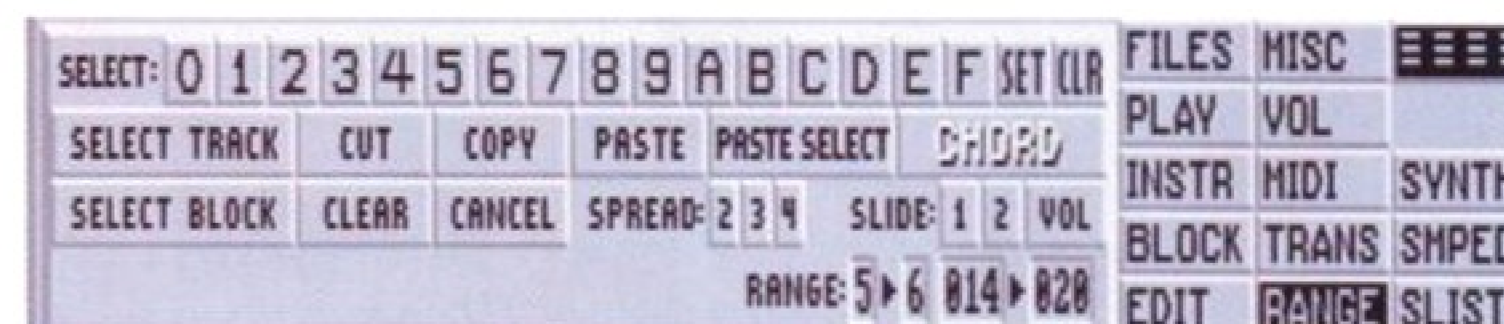
If you have MID equipment such as a drum machine, synthesiser or sampler, you can also use them via OctaMED. Using this panel, you can set up which channels you want to use as well as controlling the MIDI modes to use on a particular piece.

TRANS



The Transpose Page. If you've created a complex sequence and you want to shift whole sections of it up or down in pitch to create chord progressions, here's where you do it. You can select which areas to transpose, how much to shift them by and store notes on the actions (just in case you don't remember what you were up to).

RANGE



Using this panel, you can copy whole tracks or phrases and copy or move them all over the place. Therefore you can simply write a short phrase and repeat it by selecting it, copying it and pasting it in to a new position.

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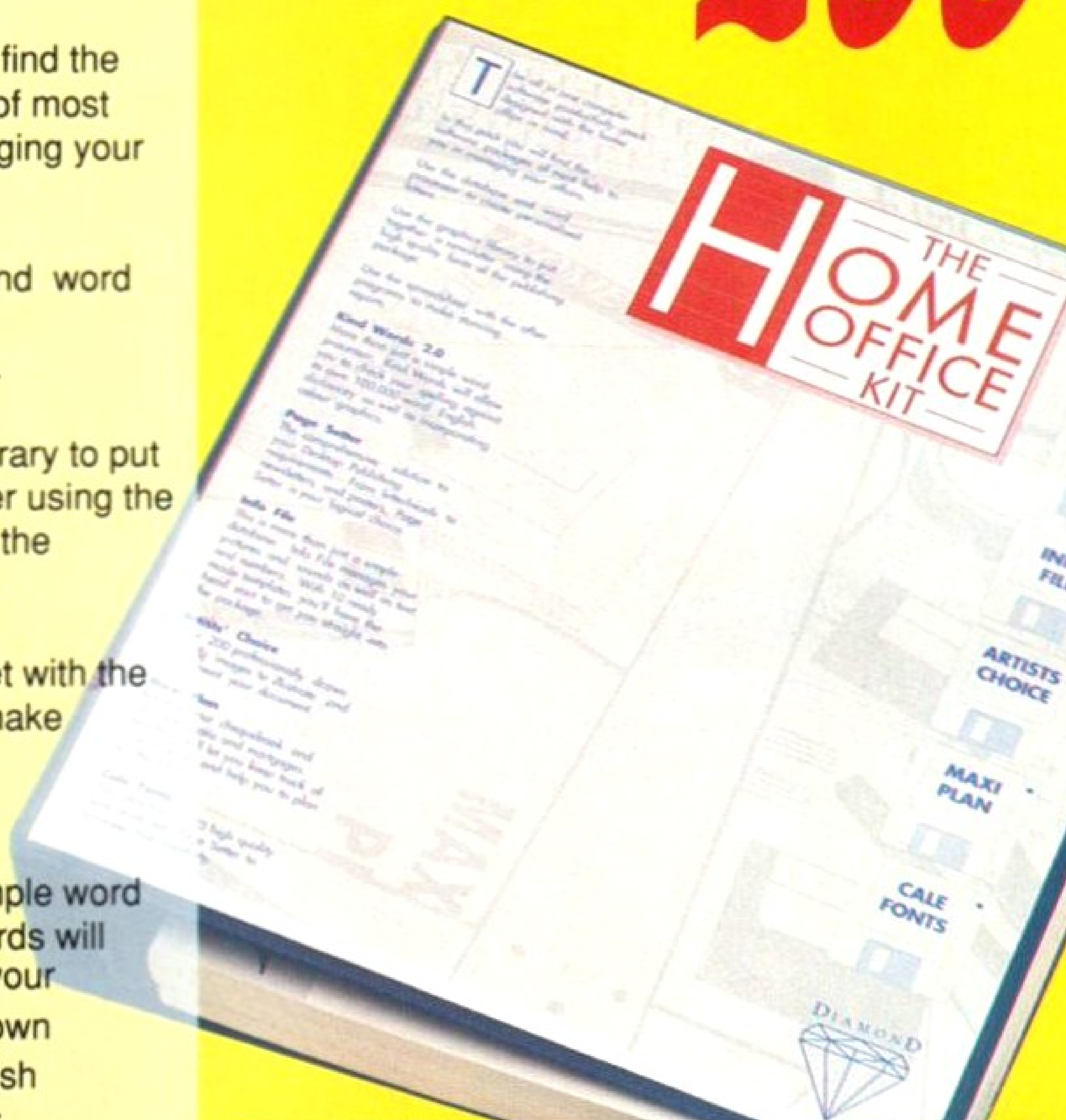
Use the database and word processor to create personalised letters.

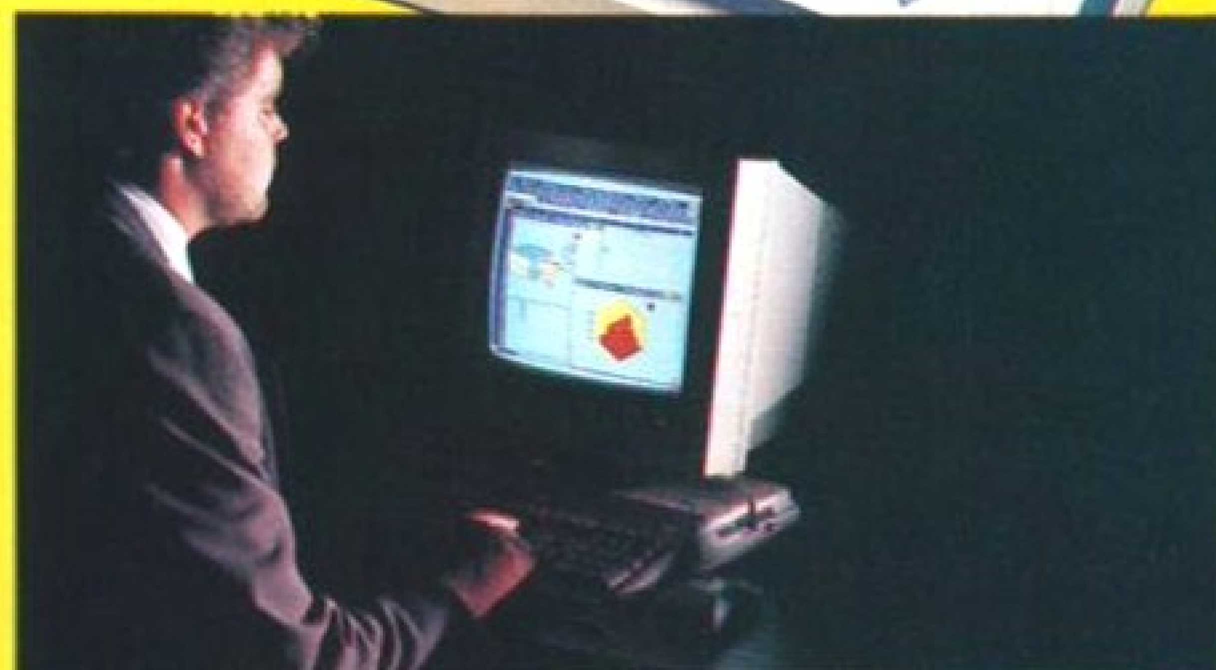
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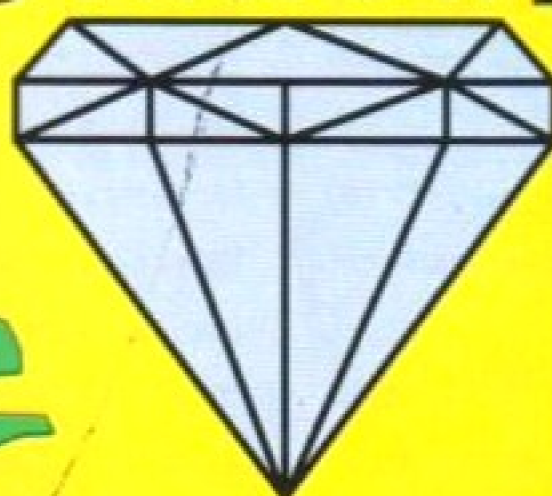
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THE LOW-DOWN

It's not our place to doubt the sanity of one of the world's leading electronics companies, but to be perfectly frank Philips seem to have gone mad. Why? Well, first they gave Amiga Format readers the chance to win a fabulous day flying a multi-million pound airliner simulator (winners on Page 250 of this very issue). And now they've offered us some items from their brand-new range of hip hi-fi gear free and for no money, giving you the chance to win them. Failure on all major logic circuits, no?

Well, of course not. It's just that they are more than a little bit pleased with the success of their new CM8833 Series 2 monitor (you know, the smart-looking one with the stereo sound that's probably the best-selling monitor for the Amiga). Anyone who's bought one over the last couple of months has got a free copy of MicroProse's top flight simulator F-19 Stealth Fighter with it and the offer has been so successful that Philips are planning to continue it over Christmas, so you haven't missed out yet.

Pleased as punch with themselves, Philips are celebrating by giving away some excellent hi-fi prizes. The lucky winner of this competition will win a smart new £500 midi hi-fi system and three runners-up will get a £200 personal CD player each. Fancy that? Get your entry in...

THE QUESTIONS

1 Which company makes the F-19 Stealth Fighter game?

- **a** MicroProse
- **b** US Gold
- **c** Mirrorsoft

2 Which company makes the CM8833 series 2 monitor?

- **a** Kelloggs
- **b** Boots
- **c** Philips

3 Which company makes the F-117A Stealth Fighter?

- **a** General Dynamics
- **b** McDonald Douglas
- **c** British Aerospace

THE WAY TO WIN

All you have to do to get your chance of winning one of these fabulous prizes is to work out the answers to the three easy questions above, then write them down on the back of a postcard or a stuck-down envelope along with your name, address and telephone number. Whack it in the post addressed to 'Philips Musical monitors Compo', Amiga Format, 29 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2DL and make sure it arrives by Friday December 13. Not too difficult, huh?

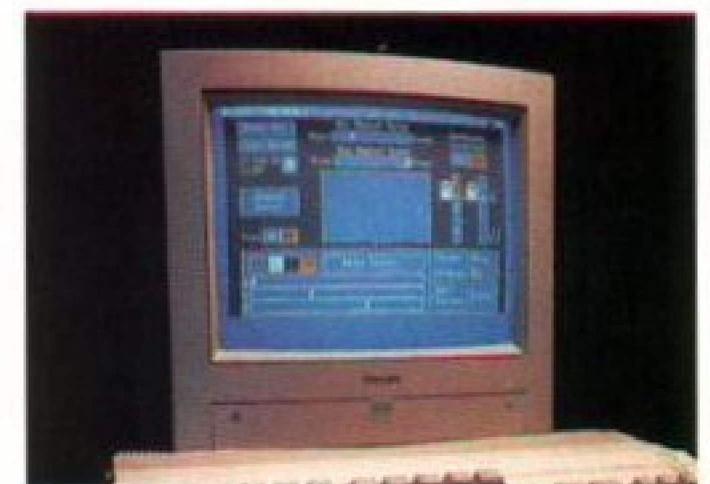
THE RULES

The editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. No cash or other alternative prizes will be offered, but if necessary we may substitute the prizes offered for others of a similar specification and value. But it's pretty unlikely. Employees of Future Publishing or Philips are not allowed to enter, nor is anyone who is a member of the George Formby fan club.



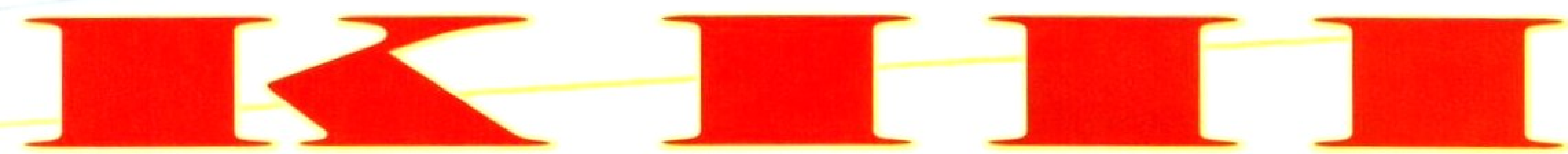






...and all because the lady loves getting a free copy of F-19 Stealth Fighter with her CM8833 Series 2 monitor!

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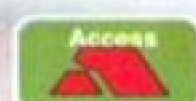
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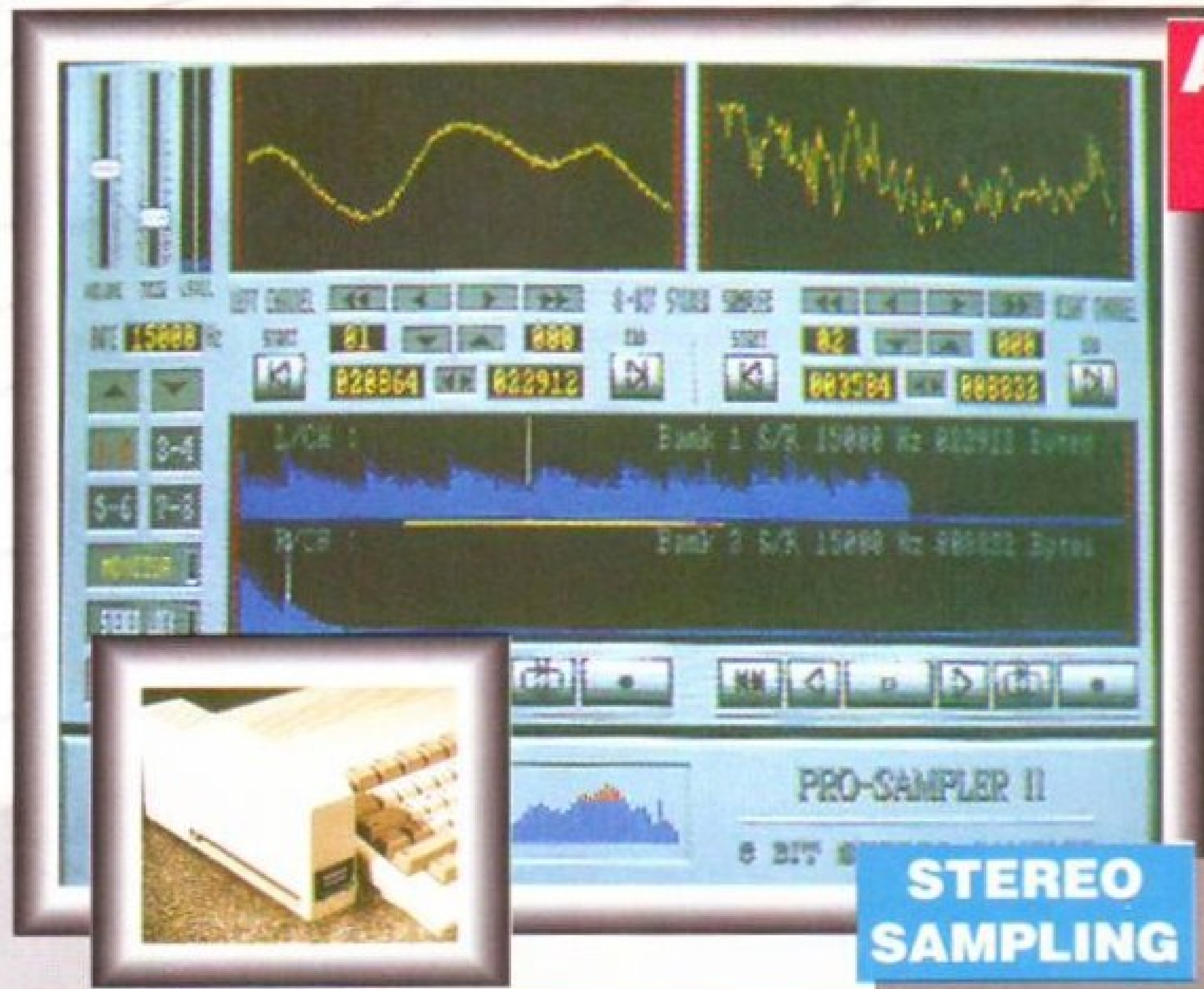


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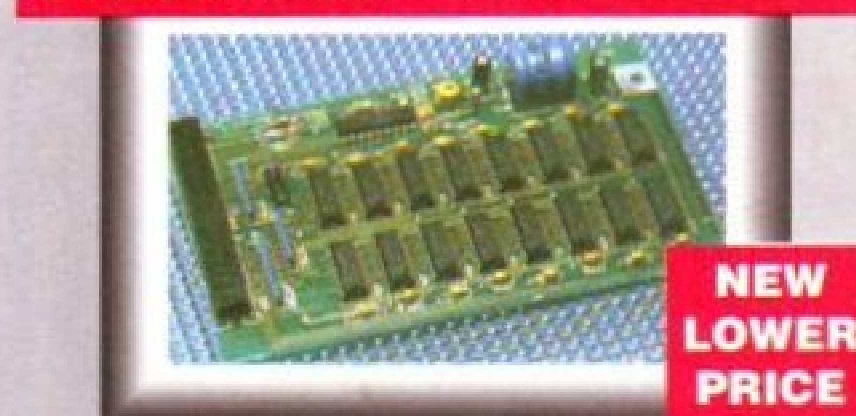
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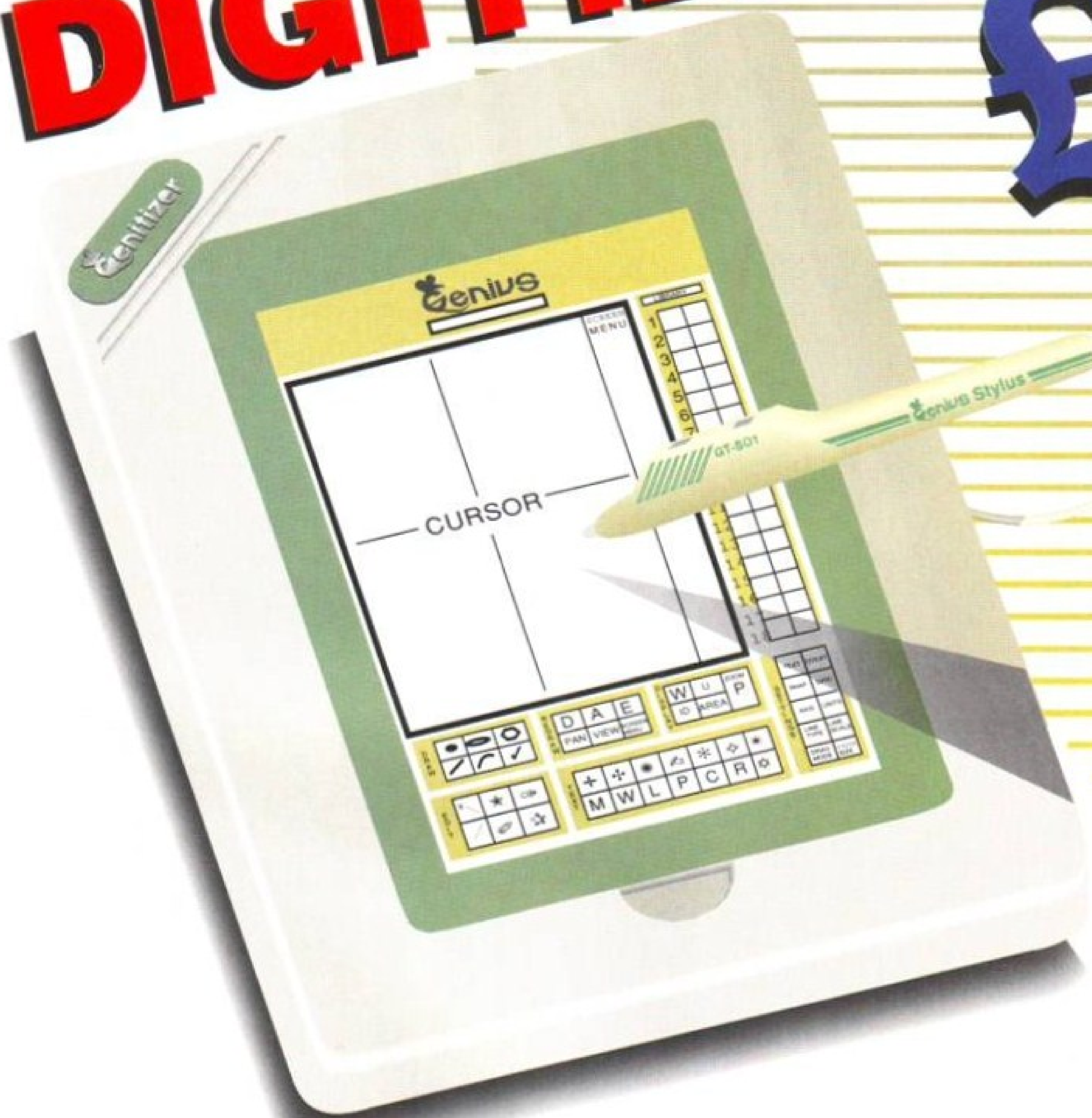
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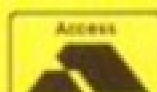
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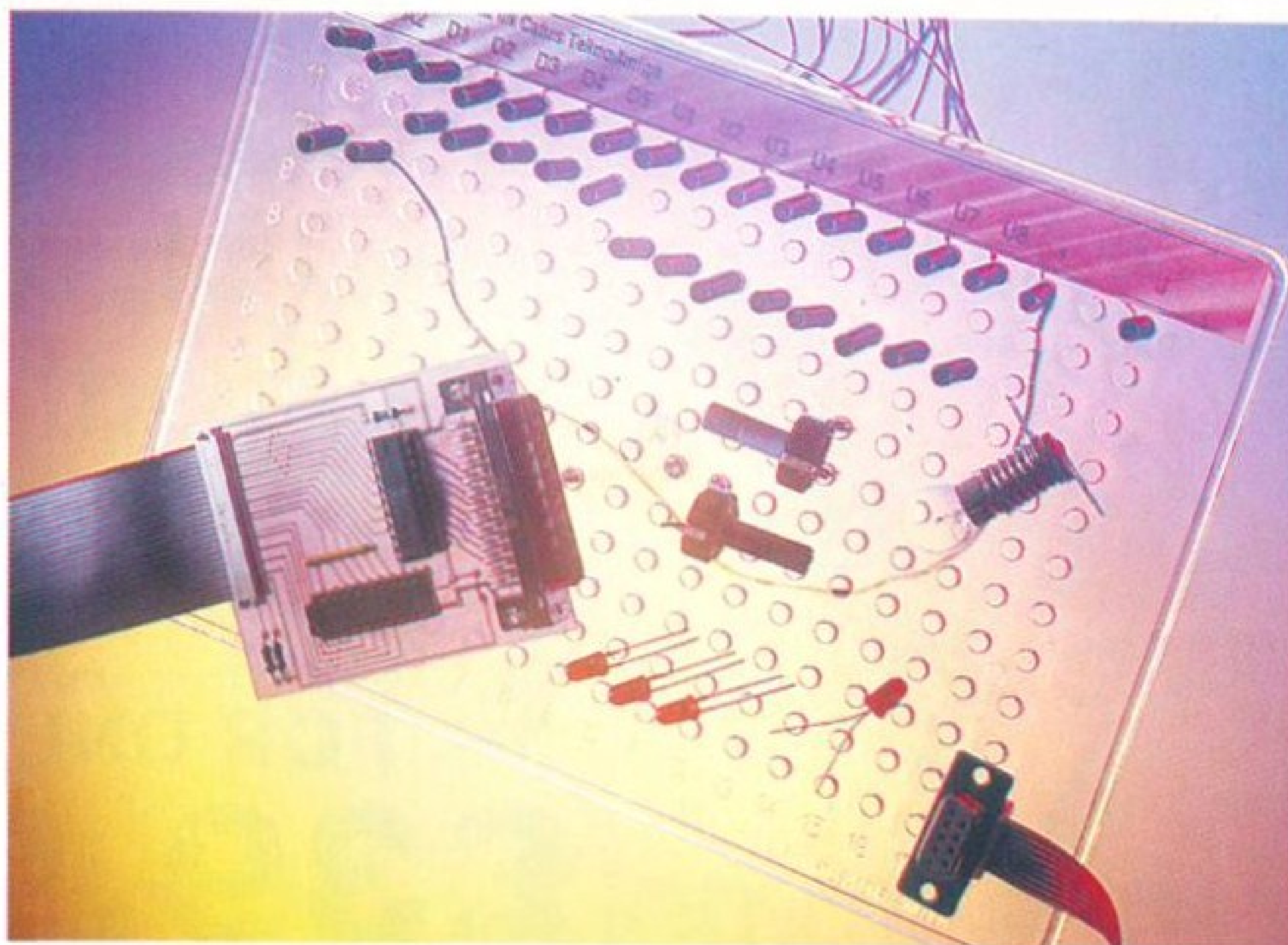
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Have you ever wished you knew more about electronics? Here's a new system for education in schools, for experimentation at home, or just for fun, which can teach you a few things. **Damien Noonan** discovers how enjoyable it can be.



The business end of the system is a kind of 'bread-board' circuit-board affair and a heap of electrical components, just like a traditional home-electronics kit. The difference is, the board interfaces to the Amiga, allowing programs to control the board and vice versa.

Techno Amiga

Electronic experiment kit ■ £99 ■ CatusAB of Finland

ELECTRONICS IS A STRANGE subject. It's so useful to know a little bit about and many of us wish we'd paid attention at school, but from a physics textbook or a poor science teacher it can be so deadly dull that the majority of us leave school unable to wire a plug.

On the other hand, it can also be stacks of fun. So much so that home electronics kits are popular in toyshops and become a training ground for kids to become boffins, radio hams or, dare we say it, computer fiends in later life.

It's this 'fun quality' of the subject that Techno Amiga is intended to encourage, and it does so in an original and highly enjoyable way. The system has three main elements: a kind of clear plastic circuit board with an interface to the Amiga; a bunch of electrical components and wires of different kinds: and three disks containing a great variety of programs to be run on the Amiga.

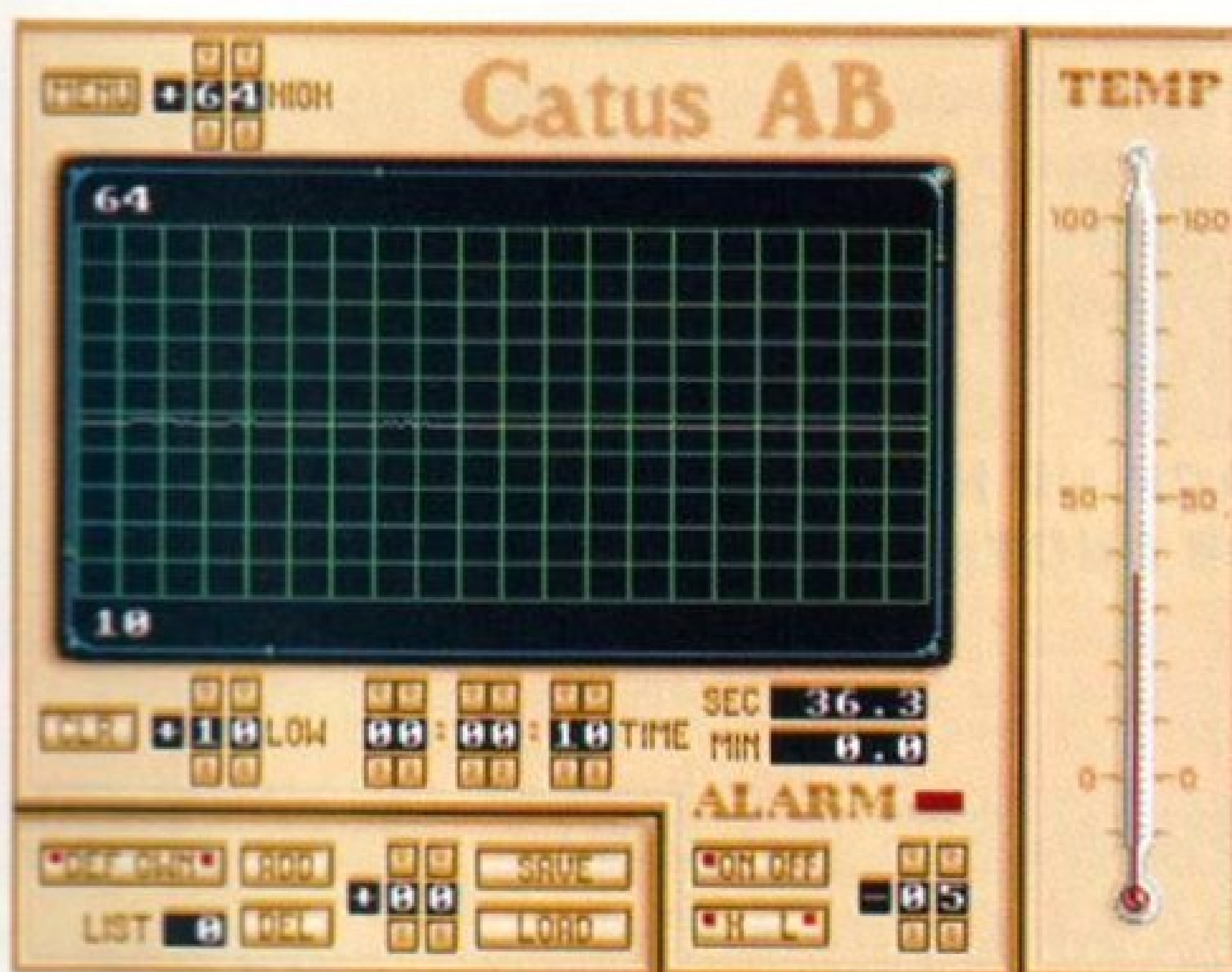
At its simplest, all the electronic gubbins acts only as switches to control the software that's running on the Amiga. The circuit board is basically just a clear piece of plastic full of holes, into which you stick a load of springs. Later these springs will be used as clips to hold electrical components, but for now you use pairs of them to complete a circuit, or in other words to act as a switch.

When the switch is closed, the fun starts. The first of the many programs you're likely to want to try is one that plays loud and amusing noises when a switch is closed. This basic idea leads on to all kinds of different ideas, all backed up by a comprehensive set of suggestions, projects and technical explanations in the amusing and highly informative manuals.

For instance, attach a couple of wires to the two sides of your switch and there's a number of fun projects to explore. One demo involves holding the two wires side by side and cutting them with a pair of snips: when the metal doing the cutting completes the circuit, a loud 'Boing!' noise emanates from the speakers.

Another example is creating a burglar alarm, in which case any break in the wires will produce a sound. Then you can move on to making your own switches out of cardboard and tinfoil and perhaps – if you're of a mischievous inclination – putting them under seats to make an appropriately rude noise when someone sits down.

It only gets more interesting from there on in as you start to use the other electrical components in the kit. For instance, there's a photo sensor which you can use as a light-activated switch: hide it in a box so that it sets off the Amiga when the box is opened. Then there's a heat sensor and another program which can measure temperatures. And there's also a highly amusing piece of kit called a Triac.



A typical example of the excellent software is the Temperature program. Input from a heat sensor on the board is monitored by the program, which can then control other actions on the board as the conditions it monitors change. Three disks full of excellent programs like this one come with the system.

The Triac plugs into the mains and then you can plug anything that runs off the mains into it. When you activate a switch on the Techno circuit board it can turn on the Triac, switching on whatever you've got plugged in.

Here's an example. A hairdryer is plugged into the Triac and pointed at the heat sensor. You run the temperature program, setting it to switch off at a certain level. Then you switch on the hairdryer, which runs and heats the heat sensor until your temperature is reached, then switches off automatically. You can also set a level of warmth at which the hairdryer will switch back on, so it keeps the heat sensor at a temperature between the two levels. It's a great demonstration of a thermostat.

That's just a brief look at some of the things Techno Amiga can do: there's a whole lot more too, but the great thing about it is that it's flexible: you could come up with all kinds of projects in your own home that would be immense fun. And at the back of all this experimentation, there's a lot to be learnt too.

All this potential is backed up by excellent manuals, full of ideas and suggestions as well as lots of information presented in an entertaining and friendly way. They also cover a lot of theory, from diodes and capacitors to resistors, transistors, current flow, Ohm's law… there's the whole basics of electronics in there.

All in all, Techno Amiga is an excellent alternative to the traditional electronics or chemistry kit as a present for an Amiga-owning youngster, as well as having great potential for use in physics or science lessons at Amiga-equipped schools. It's the most inventive use of the Amiga we've seen in a long time.

TECHNO AMIGA is available from HB Marketing Tel: 0753 686000

Techno Amiga

SPEED ●●●●
All the software is slick and effective, in the style of quality PD plus a bit.

DOCUMENTATION ●●●●
The three books are useful, amusing, concise and accessible: absolutely ideal.

ACCESSIBILITY ●●●●
The set-up of the board and interface is a little finicky, but everything else is a doddle.

FEATURES ●●●●●
The range of the programs and electronic components included is as much as you could need.

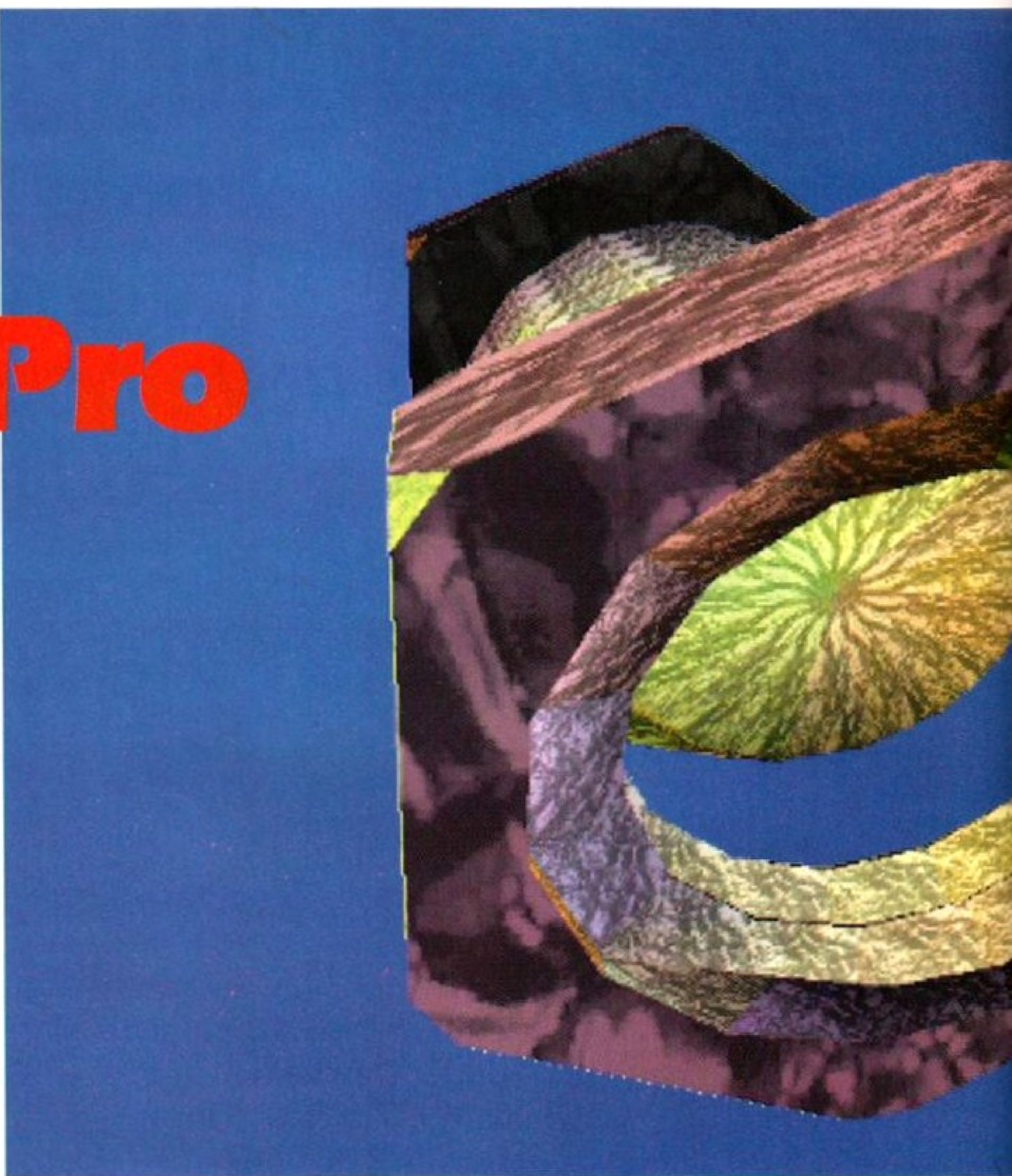
VALUE ●●●●
The only slight quibble is the price, which looks high next to toy shop home-electronics kits.



90%

Not another 3D modelling package, you cry... but this one is different. It even has parallel universes. **Brian Larkman** explores some separate realities in.....

Draw4D Pro



3D Modelling and Animation Package
£199.95 ■ ADSPEC

IF A 3D MODELLING and animation package is to make an impact on the 3D scene, it must have something different to offer. *Draw 4D Pro* does stand out from the crowd, but it also has some annoying quirks that may put you off. Let's start with those because they are the first thing you will come across.

The user interface is a standard affair: menus at the top, toolbox on the right and a working area covering most of the screen. Menus are colour-coded, to help you distinguish the various features. The icons are a bit obscure: a good diagram of the toolbox in the manual would help.

Having started with the bad news, let's get on with the good – and that is nearly all of the package. The working area can be quickly toggled between X,Y, and Z axis views and the viewpoint can be rotated in real time.

The level of zoom and perspective varies using the cursor keys. Although this method of control is not as intuitive as the mouse-based system of *Caligari* it is sensible, especially if you have lots of memory and an accelerator. Amazingly, these controls even work while an animation preview is playing. Once set, the viewpoint can be recorded and reverted to at any time.

You can use polygons with any number of sides. The real power-tool of object construction is the 'Make An Arc' tool. Up to 16 different radii can be set so an almost infinite number of fluted, star, cog, cam, or flower-shaped polygons can be created. Not quite as useful as *Imagine's* Forms Editor: but almost.

Your initial shape can then be changed in a whole variety of ways. The polygon can be 'swept' to make a sphere, a torus, or a lathed object, like a wine glass. An offset can be added (to produce a spiral staircase, for example) or the polygon can be resized during the sweep to make shells and horns. Whole objects can then be swept as well to produce a repeating apttern of shapes.

Texture Mapped with veined stone bitmap. Note that no shadows are cast inside the nut. *Draw4D Pro* avoids ray-tracing for a substantial increase in rendering speed.

DRAW4D PRO
Is available from Surface UK 081-566 6677 Price £199.95 currently, but a drop in price is expected imminently.

Polygons can be pulled out in a straight line; distorted in one axis with 'Swell'; or as a 'pipe' along a path. This last method allows fancy architectural mouldings to be constructed with relative ease.

Once objects are created they can be 'Slanted' in various ways and 'Stretched', both normally and with 'Magnetism', so that sculptural, 'plastic' deformations can be produced. These tools would be much more usable if they worked in real time.

Any number of polygons or objects can be multiple selected and moved, sized, rotated and grouped together. Multiple levels of grouping are not allowed. This is a pain if parts of an object overlap.

What causes this problem is the unique way it treats polygons. In a complex shape, every polygon is a separate object with its own points and sides, none of which are shared with the adjacent polygon. This makes for very flexible objects but uses up lots of memory.

One possible answer is to 'Meld' objects. In effect this is another level of grouping, though in fact it turns all of the melded polygons into one. Melded objects can still be grouped with other ones, as well as stretched, coloured, texture mapped and 'un-melded': they take up less memory and are quicker to move.

Another way of solving the memory problem is to construct each object separately and save it ungrouped. If a grouped object later needs modifying, the saved version can then be loaded. This idea has a major flaw – individual objects cannot be saved separately, only complete scenes, and loading a scene wipes out the one currently in memory – but there's an answer.

This is one of the most innovative idea in computer graphics: 'Space Control', a set of parallel universes or multiple scenes. Effectively, this creates and maintains a number of 'pages' in memory. If a saved scene is appended to the current Space, a parallel scene is created and objects within it can be 'jumped' to the original space. If you have the memory, the flexibility of this system is enormous, allowing you to try several ideas at once without filling up disk space with everything just in case you might need it later.

Font control for when you're doing text in *Draw 4D Pro* is amazingly powerful. Any single character can be modified and resaved with the complete font. Starting from the two provided it is possible to design your own, or replace the alphabet with a range of objects. An architect, for instance, could replace the letters with standard building components.



Both balls are texture mapped and have various degrees of transparency.



Texture mapped with wood bitmap.



The chair was modelled in three parts – the arms are semi-circular toroids. The seat is a simple 's' shape polygon . It took less than five minutes to model.

The fourth dimension in *Draw 4D* is time. Three dimensions moving through time means, of course, animation. Animation facilities are comprehensive and flexible.

Most objects can be animated via paths. Paths can be attached to other paths and hierarchies created. Translational and rotational motion can be given 'ease in' and 'ease out', can be cyclic or periodic, and can be toggled to forward or reverse. Start and end times can be a percentage of the total.

There is a powerful 'Morphing' mode with unlimited, editable levels each with its own 'ease' in and out. Paths can even control transparency levels and so 'fade' in and out.

However complex objects are, you can switch into a 'quick' mode that displays a limited view of polygons. When you are previewing animations, this 'quick' mode can be used to give an interactive real-time display. In this mode, the x,y and z axes can be rotated, and perspective and zoom level can be varied to give the best view, even when the preview is running. The effect is stunning.

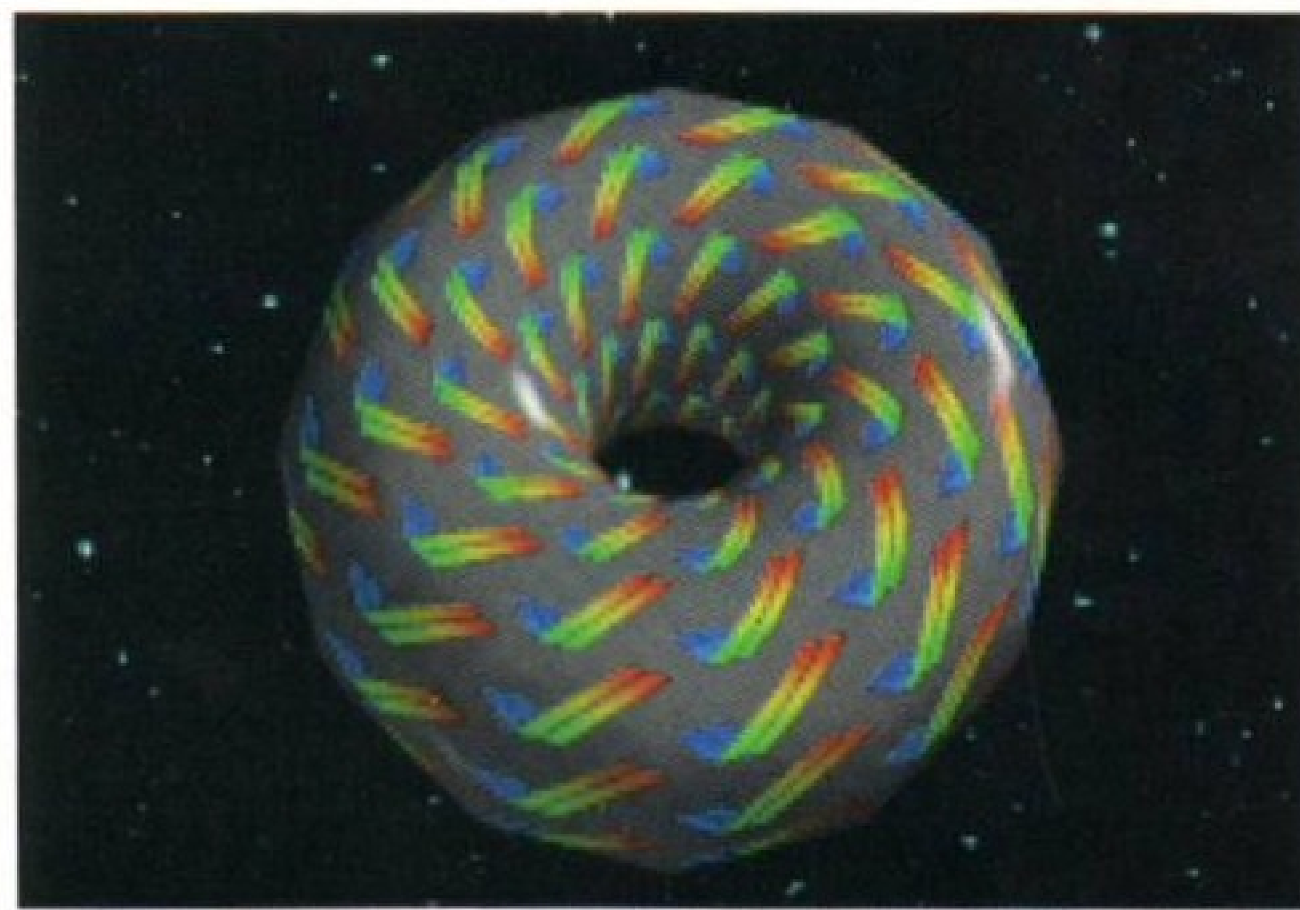
The power of preview mode becomes apparent when using Eyepaths and Canon Clip. At present, these only work in the wireframe editor and preview, not for filled rendering, this will be released later this year. Nevertheless, the effects are well worth experimenting with.

Eyepath allows the viewpoint to enter the scene and fly through and around the objects. Canon Clip limits which objects are displayed by the program to those within a defined volume.

Eyepath works by defining a path through the scene. Using preview mode it is possible to see a 'fly-through' and interactively modify the direction that the eyes are looking. For example, the path may pass through a door, up some stairs and into a room. In real life you might walk along that path, but turn your head to look around. Preview mode simulates this, even allowing you to turn upside down and look backwards as you move along the path. Truly amazing!

TEXTURE MAPPING AND TRANSPARENCY IN USE.

Texture Mapping - SHINGLES!



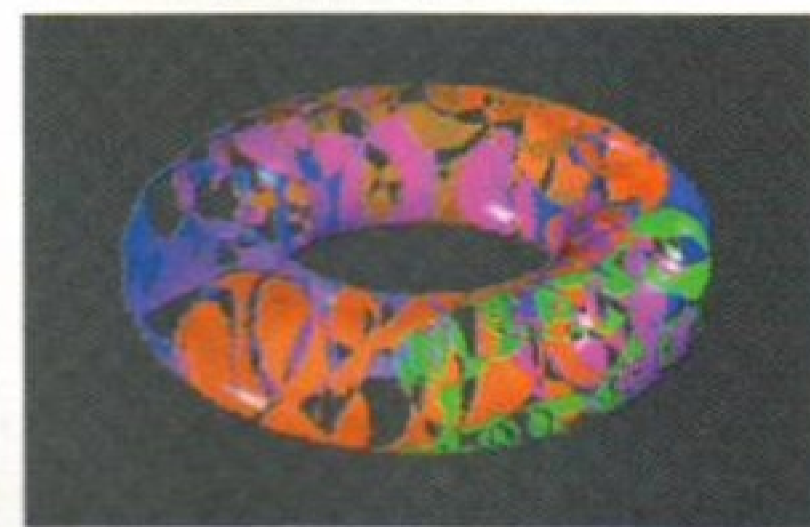
Using the Shingles setting, one copy of the map is 'tiled' onto each polygon of the object.

Texture Mapping - DECAL



Mapping the texture as a projection but with the GENL setting at Decal and Transparency set at 1 makes all of the colour0 areas of the mapped bitmap transparent, allowing the polygon colours to show through.

Texture Mapping - PAINT



Mapping the texture as a projection but with the GENL setting at Paint and Transparency set at 1 makes all of the colour0 areas of the mapped bitmap AND the polygons beneath transparent, giving an effect in this case like a clear acrylic ring with surface colour splashed on..

Transparency Variations



The two transparent areas in this picture each have different levels of transparency.

The nitty-gritty of any 3D modelling and animation package is the quality of the rendering. In *Draw4D Pro* the images look good apart from one thing – it is not a true ray-tracer, so there are no shadows! Objects are fully shaded and there is a choice of Phong and Gouraud Shading as well as a wide range of texture mapping. The quality of rendering can be judged from the accompanying illustrations.

This is a fine new program. It offers many of the facilities of *Imagine* and a whole set of new ones, but is easier to use. Modelling is straightforward once you understand melds and grouping but irregular organic shapes are difficult; *Imagine* certainly wins out here.

Animation is very powerful, especially the interactive real-time preview. The use of 'quick' mode makes the preview even better than that in *Real 3D* which otherwise has the best interactive wireframe preview. Rendering is very quick but falls down compared to *Real 3D* and *Imagine* because of the lack of shadows and mapping, though texture mapping is very friendly especially compared to *Imagine*'s. If you have to choose, the interface may be the deciding factor.

Draw 4D Pro

SPEED ●●●●
Avoiding ray-tracing helps speed enormously – but you get no shadows!

DOCUMENTATION ●●●
Good, well written tutorials but more reference would make a big difference.

ACCESSIBILITY ●●●
Clumsy icons don't help any but nevertheless it is quite easy to learn and use.

FEATURES ●●●
Very good, if not quite up to the level of the modelling top dogs *Imagine* and *Real3D*.

VALUE ●●●
Reasonable, on the whole. It's expensive now, but if the price does drop it'll be well worth it.



82%



EAGLE SOFTWARE

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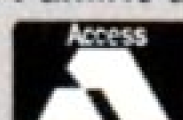
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Animated clip art takes a great leap forward (and possibly makes you take a step back) with RGB Studios' latest releases. **Brian Larkman** takes a walk – and a swim – on the wild side...

The three animals here are representative of the selection - digitised and reduced to eight or 16 colour animbrushes. No compromises are made; every muscle flex and ear twitch is shown in detail. Although EHB mode was used to get the shadows, the pictures are basically 32 colour lo-res but at 640-by-512. To animate you would have to work at 320-by-256 or drop to 16 colours.

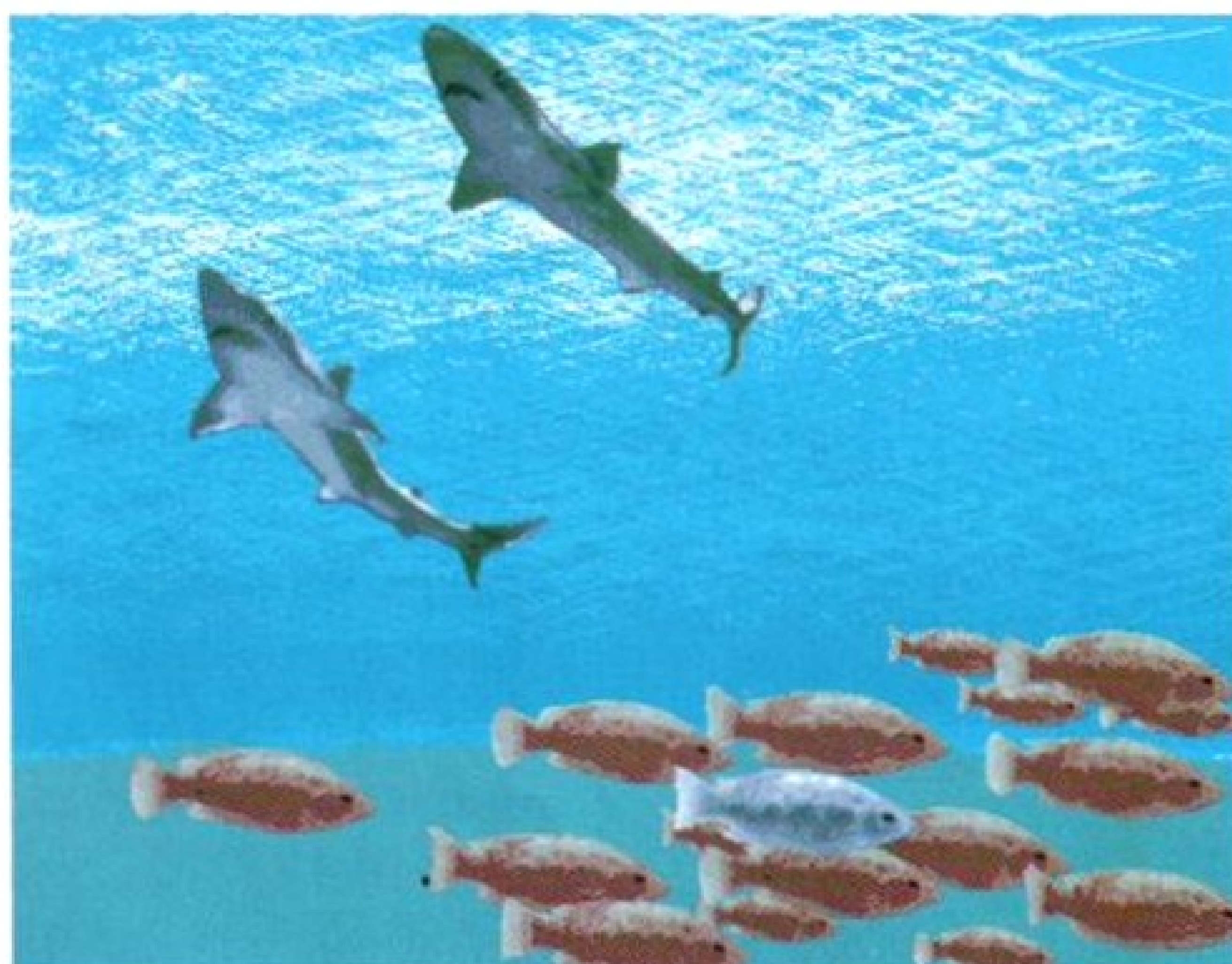
Real Things Safari and Sea Life

Animation Clip Art ■ £29.95 ■ RGB Studios

THIS SERIES, AS its name implies, has made quite a reputation for providing animated clip art of the highest quality, with the emphasis on realistic movement. Until now this has meant drawing the subjects from scratch, also to keep them pixel-simple for good memory management and partly because good sources of human and animal movement are in short supply. Hand-drawn animation is slow and expensive to produce, so RGB Studios have produced the latest two releases – *Real Things Safari* and *Real Things Sea Life* using digitised images. How have they managed to overcome the problems, and have they been successful?

The size and speed of *Deluxe Paint* 'animbrushes' (which is the basis of all *Real Things* animations) is dependent on the internal simplicity of the images. Lots of dithering or small groups of different coloured pixels use lots of memory, especially if the patterns change from frame to frame. Nevertheless, realism is improved by modelling the form of the object, and if you are working with 16, eight or even four colour images, dithering is the easiest way. This technique is used by most digitising systems and achieves high levels of realism, but at the cost of memory.

Real Things treads a path between these two ideals, and has always modelled forms using line and areas of flat colour. This gives 'posterised' looking objects when viewed as stills, but using an economy of line that requires artistic skill to visualise, the subtle movements of muscles in motion are conveyed with startling realism, once animated.



Somehow it is the dangerous animals – the sharks, lions, tigers and other predators – that have the greatest impact when animated. Against a reasonable background they emanate a strong sense of menace, even when you know they are only pixels changing colour!

The new digitised volumes - *Safari* and *Sea Life* – manage to retain this combination of painterly style and even greater realism while maintaining memory economy. They have overcome the two problems of digitised animations: copyright and pixel simplicity, with the help of Anglia TV and Sea Life Centres, and a high-quality frame grabber.

This has called for a whole new set of techniques being developed to avoid dithering, and lots of work simplifying the images by hand is still required. The results speak for themselves in these stills, though the best animals have been used and displayed here at high resolution in 64 colours.

Some of the animals that are offered in both volumes work better than others, but all of them animate rather well in the right setting. The only real problem is with sharpness and contrast. The turtle and the lioness, in particular, seem to be rather blurry round the edges, though in their natural settings both animals would be really striving for just this level of camouflage! Some of the colours are also rather more dull than necessary but palettes can always be tweaked.

Compared with the earlier Real Things volumes (there is nothing else to compare them with) Safari and Sea Life are certainly more realistic, though they have lost some of the hand-made quality that made Real Things animations so distinctive. On balance, though, the new techniques are better, especially for these subjects; the shark swimming overhead certainly evokes a real primal shiver and the lion almost makes you take a step back!

Predicting the future in this field is almost impossible but it seems likely that sooner or later desktop video – though maybe under some other name – will become as popular as still photography or home video. If so, then a lot of animated clip-art will be needed. The largest source is video but just grabbing a few frames from a VCR is not enough; animated objects, animals and people need to be captured, separated from their background and presented in a form that is versatile and easy to use. At present only RGB Studios are making any attempt at making animated images available and their change to digitised film and video footage is an important step. A very good move RGB.

REAL THINGS SEALIFE AND SAFARI are available from RGB Studios 0825 812666 £29.95 each

Real Things

SPEED ●●●●
There is no noticeable slow down using digitised images.

DOCUMENTATION ●●●●●
Amazingly good for clip-art! Includes lots of tips and tutorials for *Deluxe Paint* and each animal.

ACCESSIBILITY ●●●●●
Both the *Real Things* are ready-to-use straight from the box.

FEATURES ●●●●
Digitised images equal increased realism. Some HAM anims for *DPIV* would be nice!

VALUE ●●●●
Costs much less than a trip to East Africa and almost as much fun!



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Does Natural Graphics 24-bit fractal scenery generation and animation program really offer all the features of VistaPro at a considerably better price? **Marcus Dyson** examines the lie of the land.

Scenery Animator

Fractal scenery animation ■ £59.95 ■ Natural Graphics



Your not too likely to see the Yosemite Valley with a lake at the bottom and snow caps on the surrounding mountains, at least not for another few thousand years, but with *Scenery Animator* anything is possible.

TWENTY-FOUR BIT scenery generation and animation at this price cannot be ignored. Especially by the makers of *VistaPro*, since Natural Graphics have turned in a product with a very similar specification to *VP*, but for £20 less. True, *Scenery Animator* doesn't come in a nice (big) box like *VP*, in fact the packaging is far from impressive, but this is about the only way in which *it* loses out in a head-to-head with its most obvious rival.

In *Amiga Format* Issue 13 we reviewed *Scene Generator*, and we were very impressed with the results, but that was nearly a year-and-a-half ago, and as you know, that's a long time in the Amiga world. Nowadays more people have bigger, better, faster Amigas with more memory, and in some cases even 24 bit frame buffers. So Brett Casebolt, the developer of *SA* has included Animation and 24-bit rendering into the package.

Until very recently *SA* required the user to have a seriously expanded Amiga, a hard drive, 2 Mb of RAM and A 68020/30 plus maths co-processor were all necessary to run the program, but just as we were about to review *SA* we received an update that will work with a standard Amiga, though a hard drive and 2Mb are still required.

Animation was possible with *Scene Generator*, *DPaint 3* and a bucket load of patience, but *Scenery Animator* takes all the work out of doing a flypast of your landscapes. The animation method and interface are so simple to understand and use that newcomers to the field can be viewing their work within half-an-hour of first booting-up the program. Especially if one uses the DEM landscapes on the program disk. DEM stands for Digital Elevation Model, and it is the method adopted by the US's geological survey for measuring and recording geophysical information.

As well as the landscapes provided on disk, Natural Graphics offer a range of supplementary disks that hold DEM models of large areas of the North American continent. European surveys will be available shortly. Using real world models allows the user the option of appending several areas together to create larger animations than can be made using just one digital model. This feature is obviously not available when using fractally created scenes, since the edges of the maps cannot be made to match up (if any of the mathematicians out there know better, I'm sure Mr. Casebolt would only be pleased to see your equations).

Fractal landscapes can be animated, but the whole animation must stay within the confines of the area viewable on the map screen, and care must be taken to avoid directing the angle -view of the camera off the edges of this area or the finished render will show something that looks much like the edge of the world.

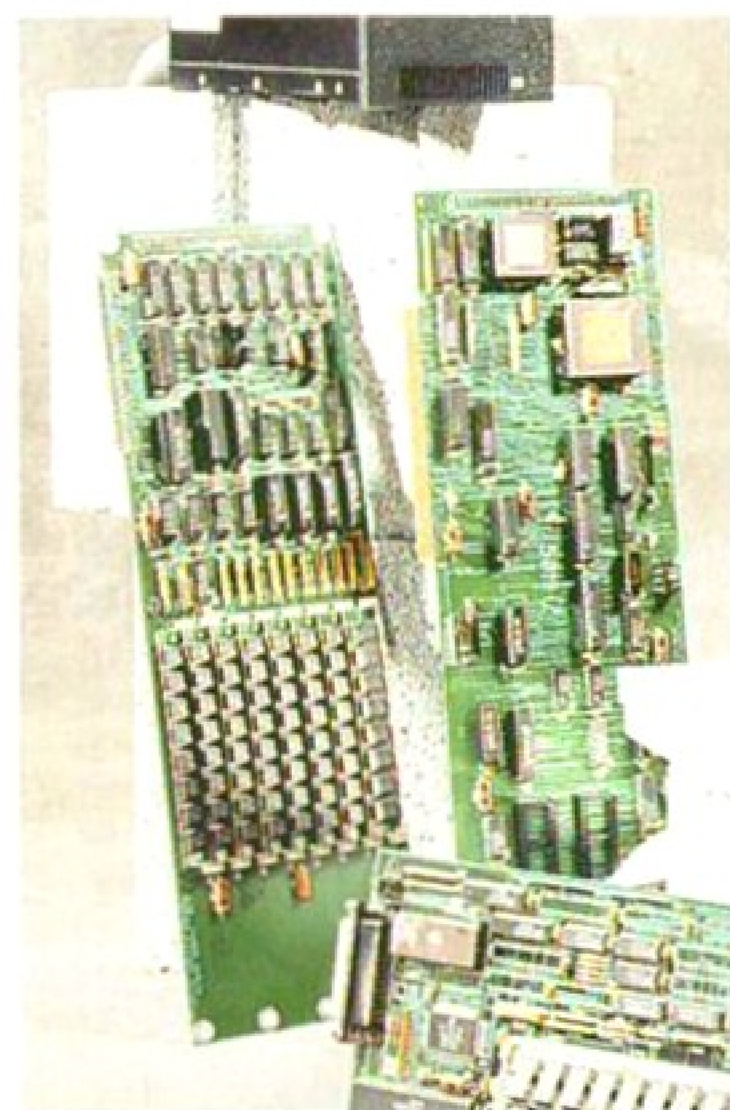
The other thing to watch for while creating animations is that the camera viewpoint is higher than the elevation of the land surface at that point, or the camera will 'dip' beneath the surface of the computer model, and some very strange pictures will result. This is very easy to avoid however, since when in map-view the computer will display the height of the surface wherever the mouse pointer is positioned.

Making an animation is a simple matter of telling the computer where to position the camera, both in terms of compass position and altitude, then choosing the focal length of the 'camera' and deciding the direction of view. Because the program uses the keyframe system, it isn't necessary to make sure all the points you define on the camera's path are equidistant if you wish to keep the apparent speed of travel constant throughout the animation. By giving each keyframe a number which indicates the number of frames left in the current animation, controlling the apparent speed of the camera is very simple.

It is even possible to create 'Pass through points' which tell the camera where it must travel, without determining which number frame of the animation it will be at when it reaches this point. This may sound somewhat complicated, but in practice it makes the creation of basic animations very easy, whilst retaining the sophistication to allow more complex effects.

SCENERY ANIMATOR is available from Post Haste. 0227 764204

MAXIMUM ACCELERATION



Rendering fractals of any kind, and particularly landscapes with their three dimensions and specifically-defined colour palletes, takes a long time. And creating animations, especially 24-bit ones, can take an eternity, so we recommend accelerating your Amiga, if this is what you plan to do.

We used the GVP 3001 board, which is the fastest 68030 available having a clock speed of 50 Mhz and 68882 math co-processor. It also allows you to use two PC hard drives with you Amiga if you so desire.



Imagine giving the start frame of an animation the number 100, this means that the anim will have a total of 100 frames, then simply click on the map to show where the animation begins. Now give the final frame the keyframe number of three and the frame number of one and again click on the map to show where the animation ends, you now have one keyframe (number 2) left which you can use to place a curve or a corner in the path of the animation. If you use the DTan button the program will automatically keep the angle of view tangential to the path of the camera, creating animations with smooth paths. If this is not the effect you require then click this button off, but at first it makes things quite a lot easier. If you now use the >> and << buttons to get the keyframe number to two and click on the map, the middle keyframe will appear joined by a camera path to the other two. If you were to place this roughly in the centre of the path, and give it a frame number of 75 it would mean that there would be 25 frames in the first half (in terms of distance) of the animation, and 75 in the last half. This would mean that the animation would appear to have large steps between frames at first as it covered half of its total distance in a quarter of the time.

This may of course be what you are trying to achieve, but if it's not, the simple answer is to give the middle frame a number of 0, which is what will define it to the computer as merely a pass through point. The animation will then scroll smoothly from start to end, assuming

HOW TO MOVE MANY MOUNTAINS



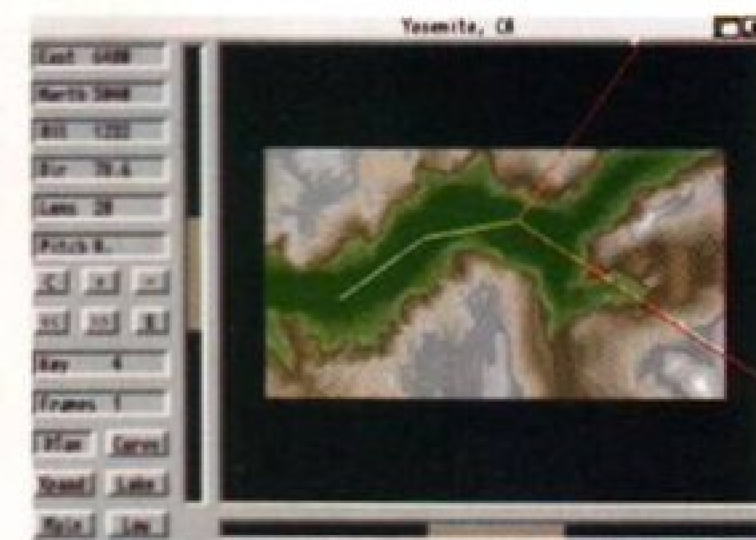
This is the main screen of *Scenery Animator*, the first screen you'll see once you load the program. From here you can create a scene fractal landscape, or load a landscape or animation from disk. You can also access the other screens from here, control the addition of clouds and sea, and control the altitudes at which vegetation, soil, rocks and snow appear on the picture. The XYZ controls along the bottom of the screen are one method of controlling the camera position, but a far simpler way is to press the map button, and you will be transported to this screen...



From here you can control both the position of the camera and the direction and angle of view simply by mouse clicks. A left mouse click positions the camera, clicking and dragging with the right button moves the red lines which indicate the view. The map here shows the view in the main picture at left. Now is the time to add lakes if you so desire. This a simple matter of pressing the lake button, then clicking on the map, all points that are reachable from where you click, without increasing in elevation, will become flooded.



By pressing the screen button on the main window, you reach this screen. The resolution and palette controls are self explanatory, but not the option for DCTV depth, SA supports DCTV, a PAL version of which will be available soon, maybe by the time you read this. The colour is controlled by range definition, which makes sense considering the variety of bit depths the program caters for. I have manipulated the palette to give the Yosemite valley a lake with a verdant fringe, and snowcaps.



By adding keyframes you can define the path of your animation, the one on the left will produce a simple sweeping arc along the valley, but manipulation of the keyframes could provide a flightpath that would put the Red Arrows to shame. Now all that remains to be done is return to the main screen and select the Anim button. The computer will then render the anim in the resolution selected from the menu, the options being IFF frames, IFF Anim5, IFF24 frames, DCTV Anim5 and DCTV Frames.

you have created enough frames of course. This system allows the novice to create polished animations very quickly, but allows the more accomplished user sophisticated and flexible control of the camera movement.

Clouds are one thing that *Scenery Animator* has over its opposition. They are fractally created and can be animated to move over the landscape from frame to frame. The colour of the clouds can be controlled in the same way as the palettes determining the colours of the snow, rock and soil, a requester enables you to put in the ends of the ranges for each, and the computer interpolates. The quality of shading depends on the number of elements and the screen mode used. As you can imagine if you have six separate ranges (sky, snow, rock, soil, vegetation and sea) from 32 colours you won't get much subtlety, no matter how much you dither. This problem does not plague those with 24-bit capability however, since a palette of 16,777,216 colours can cope with even the most varied terrains.

But who needs a landscape animation package? Well natural graphics would have us believe that few of us can survive without one. They cite some of its uses as:

- Geographic exploration from the comfort of home.
- Producing broadcast-quality animations
- Art and animation backgrounds
- Vacation, camping and hike planning
- Landscape familiarisation training
- Just for fun

Playing back animations is not done from within the package, but by means of a PD program included on the disk. The utility, *ShowANIM* by Gary Bonham (no relation, I assume) is run from the CLI , and is capable of showing anims at up to 60 frames per second. It can be included on a disk with your animation, and it should be fairly simple to create stand alone *Scenery Animation* disks.

So if these features sound interesting to you, and unless you place high importance on software coming in impressive packaging, this could be just what you've been looking for.

Scenery Animator

SPEED ●●●
Considering what it does, it does it as fast as anyone could reasonably expect.

DOCUMENTATION ●●●●●
The documentation is excellent, a simple but comprehensive guide with diagrams.

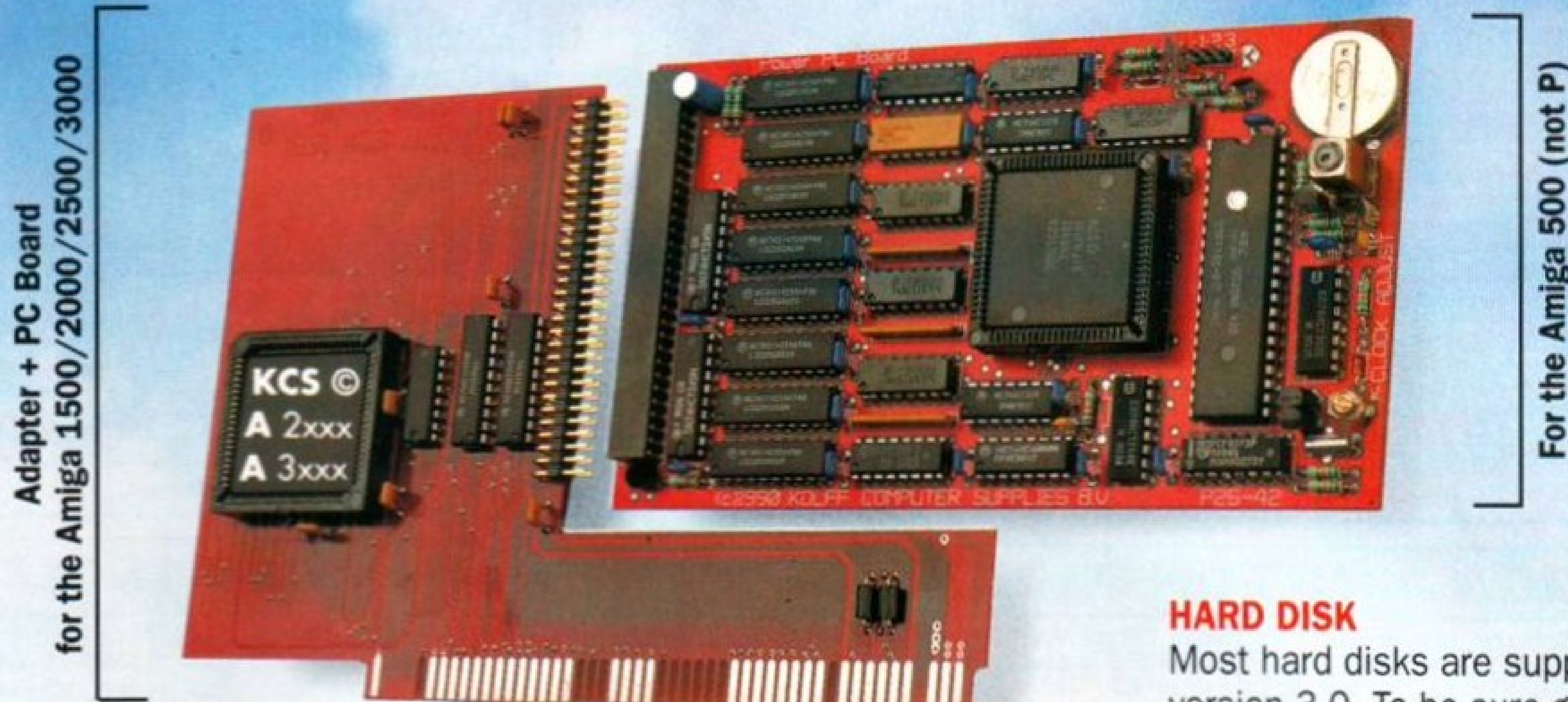
ACCESSIBILITY ●●●●●
The program is exceptionally simple to use. Good results are easy to achieve.

FEATURES ●●●●
24-bit rendering and keyframe animation, DEM compatibility and a host more features.

VALUE ●●●●●
The only competition costs a third more than Scenery Animator, so it has to be good value.

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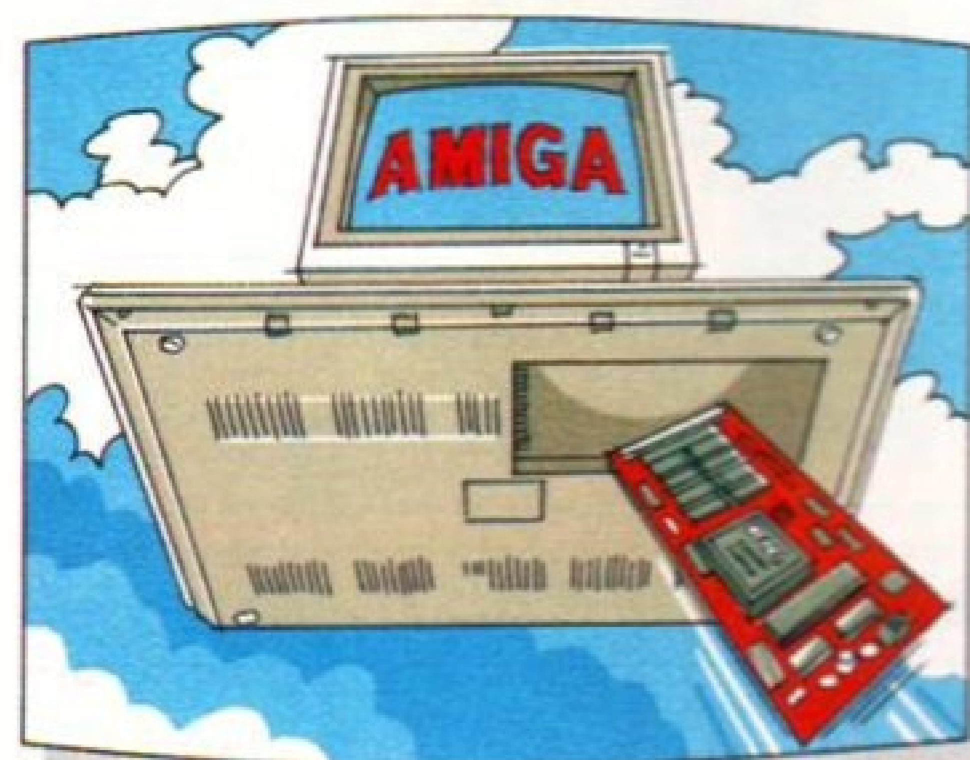
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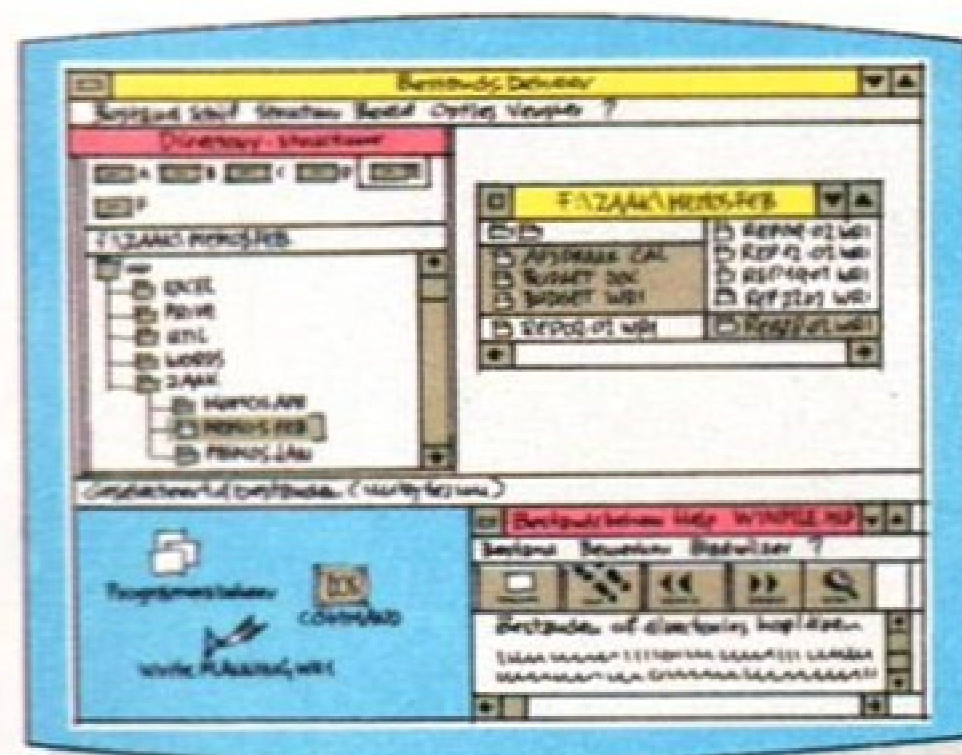


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Microsoft windows

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Your best bet for MIDI sequencing used to be Music-X, up until now that is... **Maff Evans** checks out the system used for the music on Madonna's Blonde Ambition tour to find out how you too can achieve results like the professionals.

KCS 3.5 Level II

MIDI Sequencer System ■ £279 ■ Dr T



RIGHT: The main *KCS* Track page. This is where all the main sequence information is displayed. By using the cursor you can access all the major processes of the *KCS* system, including the actual recording and playback of your songs. This page is also the launchpad from where all the functions of the MPE system are called.

EVER SINCE THE Atari ST was released with its built-in MIDI ports, the music industry has accepted the machine as the studio-standard for MIDI sequencing. The poor Amiga was left behind in the rush, with fewer developers releasing serious music software and subsequently few composers and producers have been tempted to switch from the well-trodden ST path. *Music-X* showed that the Amiga could be used as a serious composition tool, but the program still lacked some of the powerful features found in many ST packages. Well now Dr T's, creators of many successful ST music programs, have come up with a system that could make the Amiga a hot choice for the studio.

The ***Keyboard Controlled** Sequencer (KCS)* was one of the first MIDI music packages available on the Amiga, but many people found the system rather unfriendly and inflexible, preferring the more simple grid-editing and track system found on Music-X. Dr T's have refined many of the programs' aspects over the past few years, their efforts culminating in *KCS 3.5* with *Level II*.

The package is more than a sequencer: it contains all the elements you could possibly need to use your Amiga to produce music in a serious environment. Along with the *KCS* program itself (which is supplied in both standard versions for low-memory users and in its all-singing *Level II* incarnation for those lucky enough to have hefty memory expansions) the package contains the successful *Tiger* graphic editing software, *Automix I* and *II* automatic mixdown systems, the *Quickscore* scorewriting program and support for synchronisation via The Phantom SMTE system and Fostex R8 tape recorders. All these systems were originally available separately, the combined price getting close to the £700 mark. All those who have just fainted at the thought of how much the package must cost, don't worry! Dr T's are offering the entire system for less than £300!

So now you know what's in the package, let's have a look at what they actually do...

KCS Is available from Zone Distribution 081-766 6564

Any fine tuning that needs to be done on sequence data can be carried out on the KCS Edit page. By typing information into the relevant columns, you can enter and delete phrases or change the various attributes of a particular note.

KCS

Anyone who has been involved with making music for some time will know what to expect from the *KCS* program itself. The program can be operated in various ways. By working in TRACK mode, you can record music in real time, enter notes in step time or input data note-by-note on the edit page. These sequences can then be strung together in OPEN mode to form complete passages, ready for use in constructing songs.

KCS consists of various pages, all of which are called up via the main screen. The top half of the main screen is taken up with a display listing the 48 tracks along with their status, while the bottom of the screen consists of the option buttons and the transport controls. By clicking on the buttons at the bottom of the page you can call up pages to control anything from the program environment to the actual sequence editing page.

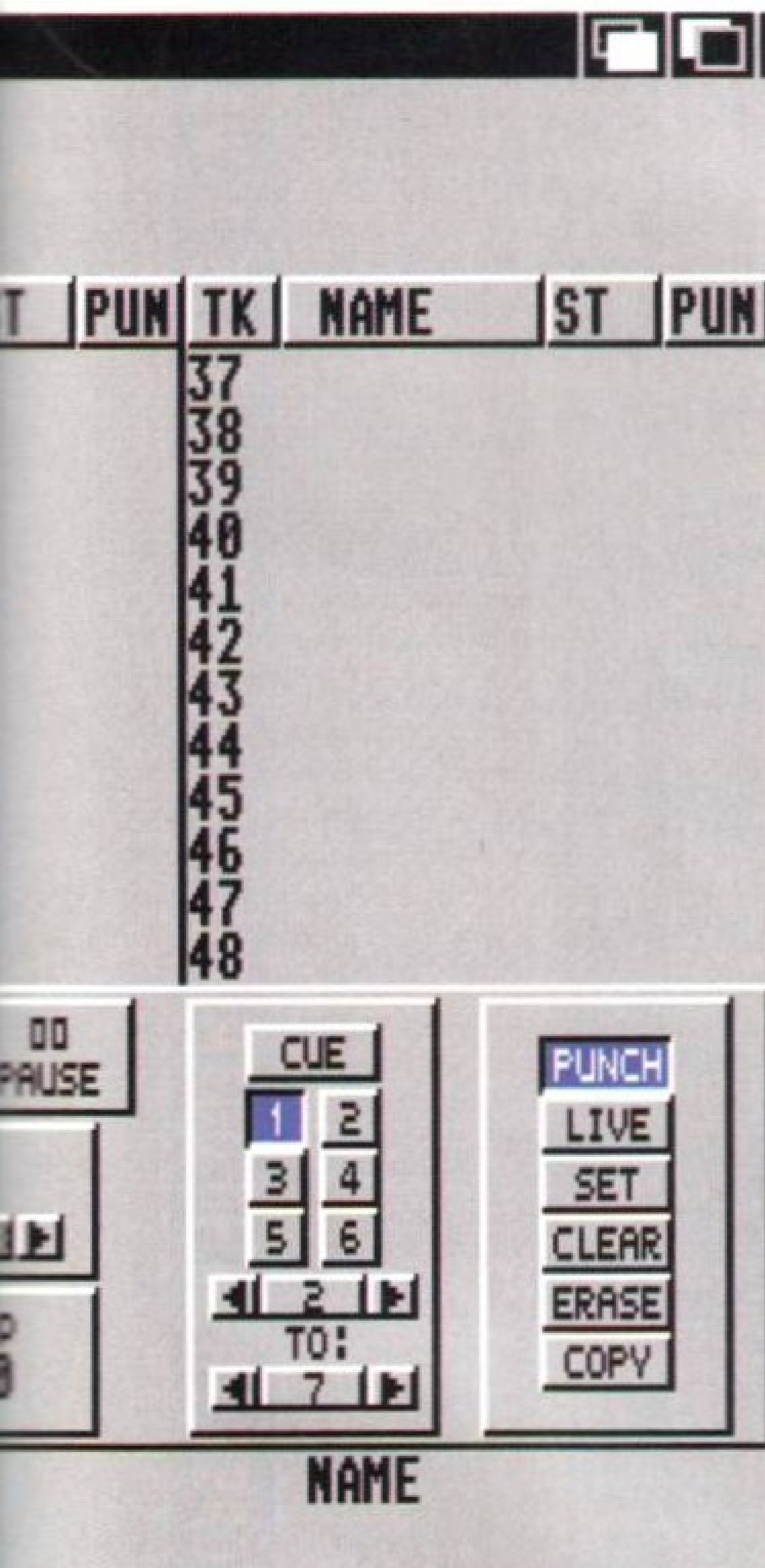
Tiger

Editing notes by typing entries onto the page may not be everyone's cup of tea. If you prefer to edit in a more visual way, then *Tiger* is for you. Notes are displayed on a grid, a horizontal bar portraying the note length and a vertical line displays velocity. These attributes can be adjusted by selecting an option and simply dragging the notes into shape. Along with altering the notes, you can also call up timing and aftertouch windows. This allows you to draw graphic representations of key pressure information, tempo changes and pitch bends, making editing all the information in a sequence extremely free and flexible.

As well as being able to edit the actual sequence data, you can use *Tiger* to call up pages storing instrument data and drum banks. This allows you to create settings to correspond with your own MIDI set-up, so that you can load up the required banks before you start, thus saving time when setting up your gear! Another use of this option is when taking your sequence information into another studio using KCS. By simply calling up instrument and drumkit banks saved on your own set-up, you can automatically configure the equipment in other situations to meet your own demands.

Automix

Most studios use sophisticated and expensive equipment to create the final mix-down of a song. *Automix* allows you to carry out a similar process via your computer. You can control stereo panning and volume settings in real-



time, group channels for quick control and store settings to use on future sessions. Although it sounds simple, *Automix* gives you a great deal of control over what are usually complicated processes.

Quickscore

Using *Quickscore* is simplicity itself. All you do is call up the program, set up the way you want the notes displayed and print it out. Then you have a hard copy of your song's notation. What could be simpler?

Phantom

Since *KCS 3.5* is tailored towards the more serious end of the music-creation market, some kind of multitrack tape synchronisation is essential. The package comes with support for a couple of sync options: you can either use the Phantom SMPTE box or lock the sequencer to the Fostex R8 machine. Once your tape machine is locked in, the transport controls on the main *KCS* play page cause the tape machine to run in sync with your sequences, allowing you to locate sections and punch in and out with relative ease.

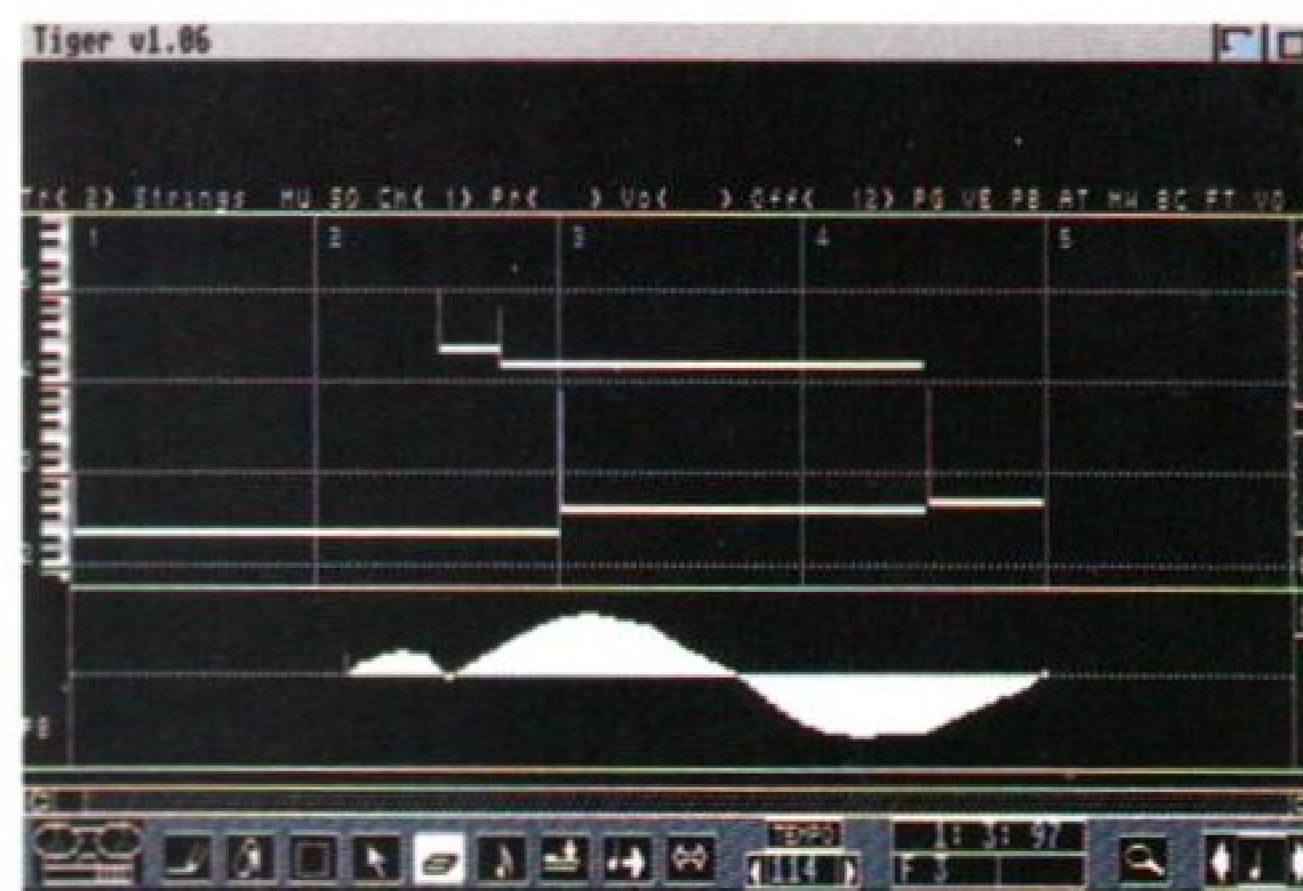
Where *KCS 3.5* comes into its own is the addition of the Multi-Program Environment (MPE). This allows the user to call up various programs from the main *KCS* screen. "So what?", I hear you ask, "The Amiga has always been multi-tasking". Ah, but MPE goes even further. Not only does it allow other programs to run along with *KCS*, but it allows you to instantly pass sequence data between modules. For example: you can record notes via *KCS*, edit them using *Tiger* and print out a score using *Quickscore*. All you have to do is pull down the MPE menu on the main *KCS* screen, select the required program and click on a button to transfer the data. Dead simple.

The flexibility of the MPE along with the sheer power of the editing capabilities means that *KCS 3.5* could be the program which shifts the music market towards the Amiga's direction. The system already has a number of prestigious users backing it up, including the fact it was used on Madonna's Blonde Ambition tour. To tell the truth, it's not surprising that the package is gaining a reputation for itself. The system caters extremely well for the serious MIDI musician, containing all the tools you'll need to produce music in a home recording or studio environment. The interface may seem rather complicated at first, but the system is aimed at those with experience in recording electronic music. Despite this, the manuals explain everything in an easy-to-understand fashion, so that relative beginners can still get to grips with the programs.

Whereas most sequencers tie you into a particular way of working, the sheer flexibility of the *KCS* system means that you can approach music creation in almost any way you want, making the creative process extremely fluid. Once you come to terms with the idea of switching in and out of different pages, the control method soon seems pretty simple. However, this doesn't mean that the system is overly simplistic. The power that the programs give you over editing is incredible, allowing you to carry out almost undreamed of processes at the touch of a button.

If you're serious about creating music, then *KCS 3.5* is probably the most comprehensive flexible and powerful sequencing and editing system you can buy. If you've already got a MIDI package though, Dr T's are offering upgrades at a reduced cost. Owners of *Sequencer One*, *MRS*, *Tiger Cub*, *Music-X Jr* or *Pro 24* can get the package for £179, while Music-X users can trade it in for £149. This is a limited offer so get in touch soon!

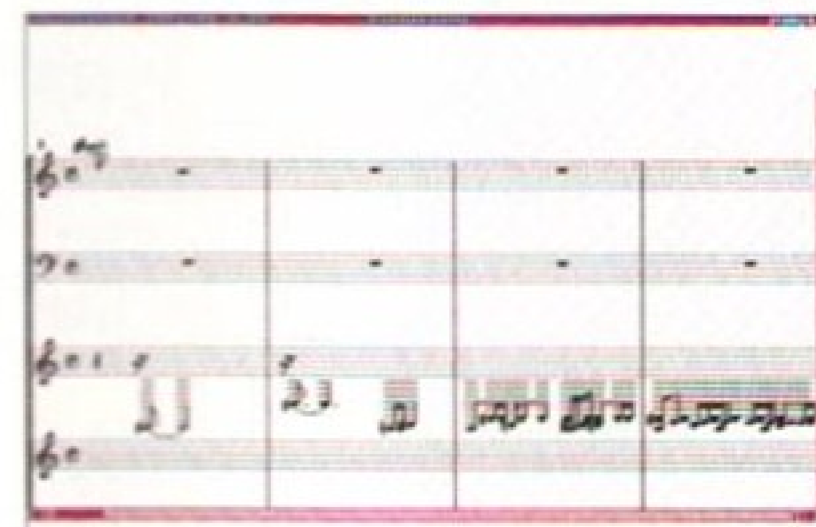
KCS 3.5 isn't just a straight-forward sequencer – the package contains a whole host of programs to allow you a great deal of flexibility in creating music.



***Tiger* is a graphical environment for editing sequence data. Not only can you cut-and-paste phrases within a pattern, you can alter the tuning and duration of notes, adjust their velocity, and edit tempo, after-touch and pitch bending information, simply by drawing on the screen with the mouse pointer.**



After creating your masterpiece, you can set mixing levels and stereo panning using the *Automix* program. Using the sliders, you can fade channels in or out in real-time or produce impressive stereo effects. You can also program and save 'groups'. This allows you to quickly control the settings of a number of channels.



If you want to go further than simply recording music and produce a full score on sheet music, you can call up *Quickscore* to do it for you. The Multi-Program Environment (MPE) means that all your sequences note data is automatically passed to the program, so all you have to do is specify how you want the score printed and it will appear before your very eyes.



For those of you with complex MIDI set-ups, configuring channels for instruments at the start of every session can be very time consuming. By using the special Instrument and Drumkit pages on *Tiger*, you can define channel and MIDI note settings for a whole host of instruments and drum modules. These can be saved out for use in future sessions, thus saving set-up time and allowing other users to configure a different set-up to their needs. Basically General MIDI for any instrument!

KCS 3.5

SPEED ●●●●
Pretty nippy on the whole, but some complex processes take a little time.

DOCUMENTATION ●●●●
Detailed, but you do need to know your MIDI onions to understand the manuals fully!

ACCESSIBILITY ●●●
Most options easy to access, some items need experimenting with before they become clear.

FEATURES ●●●●●
The package contains just about everything you could need to produce MIDI music.

VALUE ●●●●●
Although £279 may seem expensive, you are getting £700 worth of state-of-the-art software!

AMIGA GOLD FORMAT **92%**

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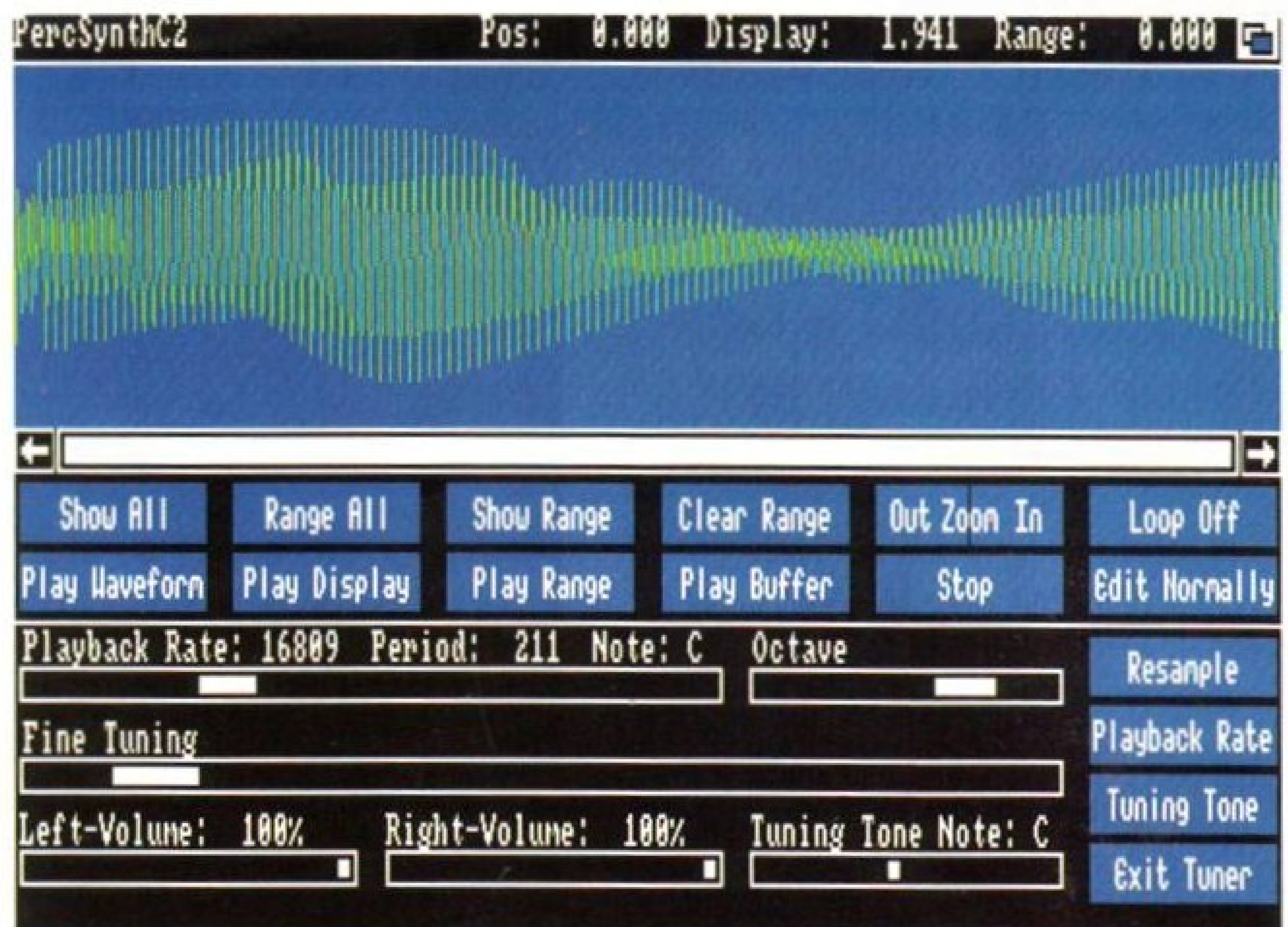
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Aegis' Audiomaster series has long been accepted as the top-of-the-range sampling software, but a pretender to the throne has arrived. **Maff Evans** finds out whether Sunrize's young hopeful can knock the old master off its pedestal.



As well as giving you a flexible waveform editing environment, *Audition 4* avoids the old 'out of tune sample' trap by giving you accurate control of pitch of the wave before you save.

Audition 4

Sound Sampling Software ■ £49.99 ■ Sunrize Industries

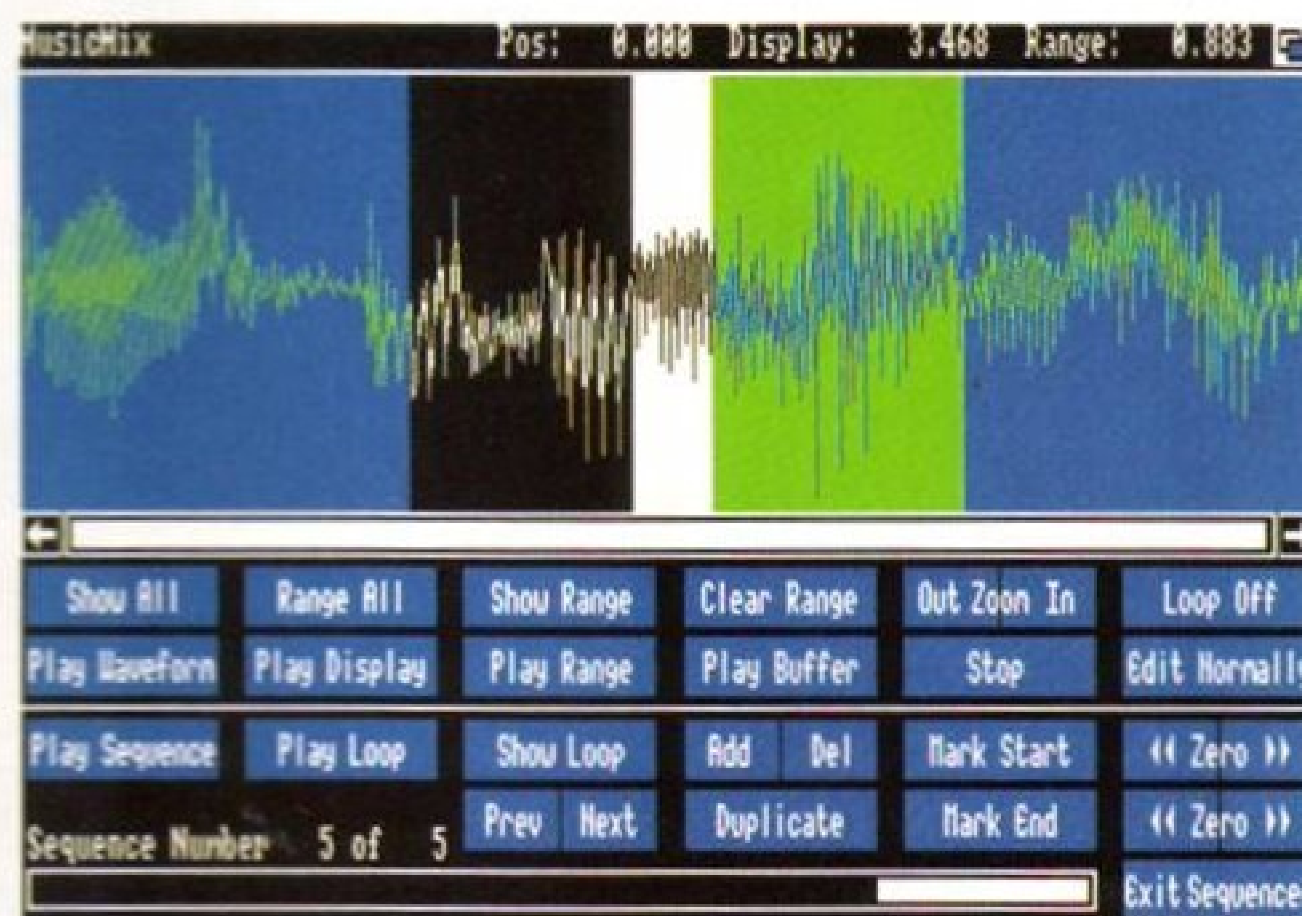
SOUND SAMPLING ON the Amiga has come a long way in the past couple of years. Early systems required you to use a brick-like interface and rather simplistic software to produce moderately good sounds. These days you can utilise advanced 12-bit and 16-bit sampling cards and slick editing software to produce the kind of sound usually found only in recording studios.

Sunrize have been instrumental (no pun intended) in bringing high-quality sampling within the range of the home user. Their sampling cards bring the Amiga in line with much more expensive dedicated samplers and their range of sampling programs have achieved a great deal of success. Unfortunately for them, their packages have always been compared with Aegis' superb Audiomaster series, with their shortcomings being seized upon to show the programs in an unfavourable light. But now Sunrize have something to challenge Audiomaster's reign in the form of *Audition 4*.

The package comes as a software-only system, so unfortunately you have to own a sampling cartridge to use it. In the box are two disks, one with the actual software and another containing demo samples. Loading up the software presents you with the basic screen containing a waveform display and some basic editing controls. Additional screens can be called up by accessing options in the pull-down menus, including sampling controls, editing, looping, tuning and effects panels and a real-time oscillator display. This flexibility of control over the windows allows you to tailor the display to your own requirements, rather than having to cope with unnecessary buttons all over the screen. Anyway, enough about the display, what about the options? Let's start with the actual sampling process...

Audition 4 gives the user more control over the sound input than most systems. As well as being able to select mono or stereo input, set the sample rate and trigger level, you can also use the software to select which channel to sample, how loud the sample should be and also effect the final wave mixdown – all before you even record! Once you have the sample in memory, you can carry out just about any editing process you could want. The program also contains a loop sequencer in a similar style to the one found on *Audiomaster III*, allowing you to recreate a song from a few short phrases.

One thing lacking in many sampling programs is the presence of a range of effects. No worries here though! *Audition 4* contains a range of echo, delay, filter and flange effects which can be used to either effect the waveform or on a real-time input. If this still isn't enough, you can also create stereo panning and mix effects at the touch of a button!



An option that was only previously available on *Audiomaster III* is the ability to arrange loops into a sequence. This allows you to sample short phrases from a song and recreate the entire track using far less memory.

One feature which puts this package ahead of the pack is the ability to record lengthy samples direct to disk. This means that you can construct music demos simply by recording a sample to floppy and adding a picture. Marvellous stuff!

So... onto the big question: 'What is the better buy?' Well *Audiomaster III* scored highly in two departments – its ease of use and the quality of samples possible. *Audition 4* is most certainly capable of incredibly good samples, especially when you consider the fact that it can be used with Sunrize's 12-bit and 16-bit audio cards. But how easy is it to use? The flexibility of the display means that everything can be easily accessed, allowing you to display the panels that you frequently use and leave out the ones you only need occasionally. *Audition 4* uses a sensible method for labelling the controls, printing the names in clear English rather than using obscure icons. This makes everything easy to operate and saves a hell of a lot of confusion! The only slightly dodgy aspect is the positioning of loop pointers, which could be confusing at first. Still, when you get the hang of it you will soon be editing waveforms with ease.

Even for those not well versed in the art of sampling, *Audition 4* is a joy to use, thanks to the clear manual and well-designed tutorials. By following a few simple instructions and loading up a demo sample (which includes snatches of Forbidden Planet and RevCo songs), you'll figure out how the options work.

Well that settles it. There's nothing for it but to say *Audition 4* is just about the most comprehensive and powerful sampling software you can buy. Couple this with incredible ease of use and you've got just about the best package you can lay your hands on.

AUDITION 4 is available from Zone Distribution. 081 766 6564

Audition 4

SPEED ●●●●●
All the options are carried out considerably faster than just about every other package.

DOCUMENTATION ●●●●
Everything is pretty well explained, with tutorials for the more complex aspects of the system.

ACCESSIBILITY ●●●●●
The flexible window control makes the display the best yet seen on a sampling program.

FEATURES ●●●●●
Everything you could ever want from a sample recording/editing program has been included.

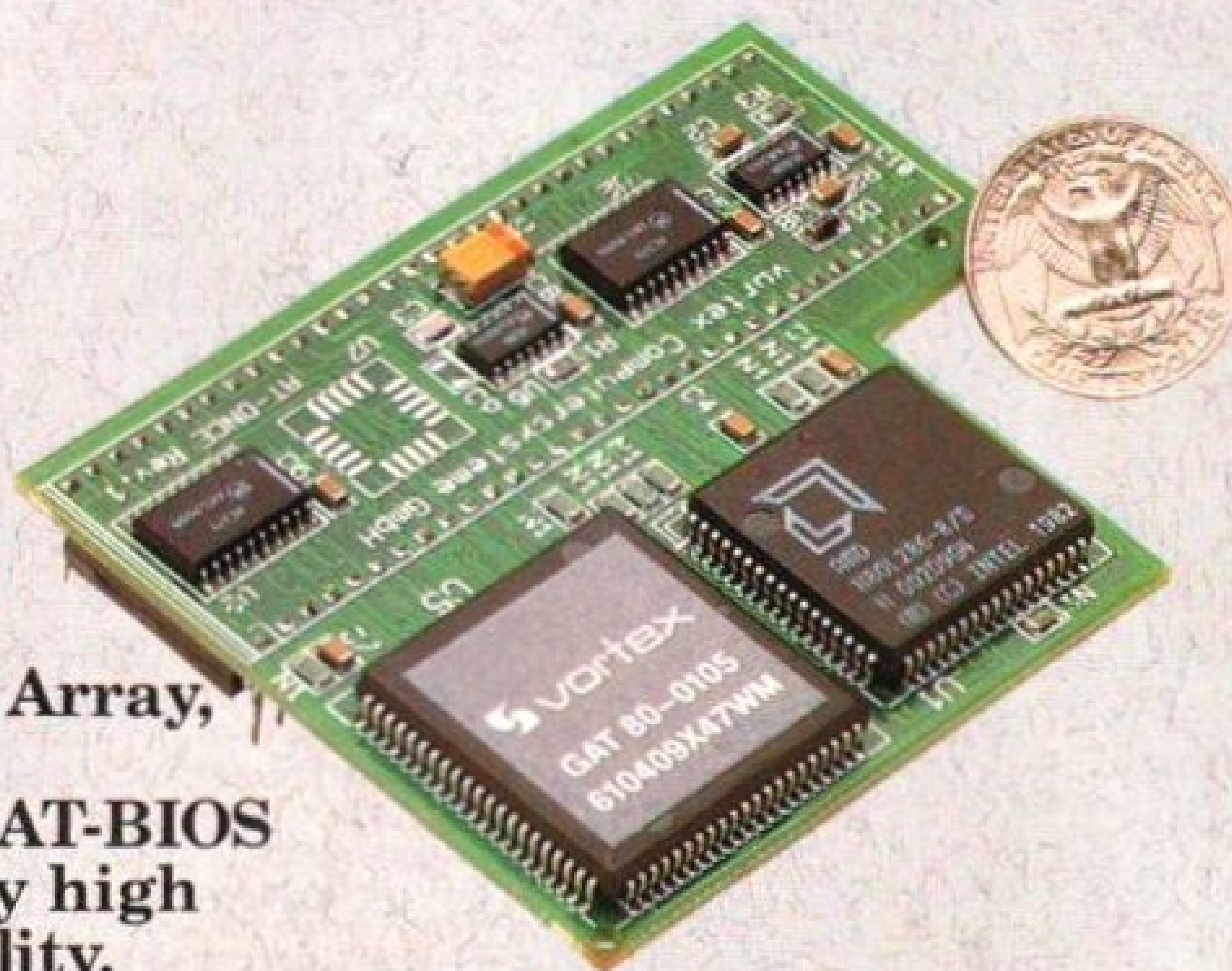
VALUE ●●●●●
Cheaper than *Audiomaster III*... which just makes it an absolute must for any sampling fan.

AMIGA GOLD FORMAT **93%**

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U084....Wordwright....For all you dizlecksicks!
U089....Journal....Very good account-handler
U111....Tarot (2 disks)....Amiga card reader!
U077....TBag 31....Includes boot intro
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U093....Jamcracker....Songcreator from Vision. Well presented
U097....Red Sector demo-maker....Recent. Exc. disk

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D016....Acid Music....Some wicked museec & grapheecs!
D017....Addams Family....Slideshow of TV series
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D022....Budbrain Megademo (2 disks)..Still one of the best disks around
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D062....5 Ways to Kill a Mole....Funny. Not for animal lovers!
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D063....Fillet the fish....The possible sequel to Puggs. A must
D064....Fraxion Fantasy....Gothic slideshow
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D069....Franklyn the Fly (1Mb)....Long cartoon on cute little Franklyn
D075....Girls of Sport....Pretty shots of talented girls
D078....Goldfire ultimate fx....Excellently produced. Watch those bobs!
D222....Greenpeace....Demo of Green group. Interesting
D082....Holsten Pils....Demo reproduction of ad.
D083....Home & Away....Down-under disk
D092....Iraq Demo (1Mb) Topical cartoon. Bush meets Saddam! Bang!
D099....Jesus loves Aciid....Mindblowing music and graphics
D210....Kick Off 3....Good Music
D103....Legend of Billy the Kid (1Mb)....Long running animation. Good
D106....Madonna cartoon anim....One for the fans
D114....Mike Tyson anim....Well compiled
D117....Magician v2.0...Recently appraised animation. Recommended
D218....Mr Potato Head....Incapable dancer demo
D231....Mr Potato Head 2....Humorous sequel
D126....Neighbours....Slideshow from Ramsay Street
D128....Punk croc crew megademo....Now see Jason get shot Ha!
D129....Puggs in Space .Brill cartoon. Puggs finds it's a different world!
D131....Pussy: Innership....Demo, music, game. Recommended
D132....Phenomena demo....Top-quality demo
D143 Ray-traced pics....Some lovely pictures.Loads of W/B
D146....Red Sector megademo (2 disks)....RSI's classic
D225....Reincarnation of Sgt. Pepper (2 disks)....Beatles classic
D148....The Run (1Mb)....T. Richter's car-chase animation. Good
D205....SAE 53....10 quality demos
D154....Subway Clapping World....Music & Graphics. Oldie favourite
D162....Stealthy Manoeuvres (1Mb)....Excellent demo
D166....Star Trek Animations....Anims. of USS Enterprise
D177....Star Trek Animations ...Agatron no. 17. More like above. Good
D230....Star Trek Slides (2 disks)....From TV series
D189....Viz Slideshow....Fat slags & others in this slideshow
D200....Silents Bluehouse (2 disks)....Game, demo & great music. Excellent
D201....Sickness simulator....Amusing sounds such as farts, belches etc.
D226....Virtual World....Good

MUSIC

M001....808 State remixes....Four good tracks
M006....Batdance remix....Really good disk. Catchy stuff
M010....Bachbusters....An alternative sound to composer's version!
M013....Crusader's Bacteria....Excellent production from the music maestros
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M086....Great Balls of Fire....Goodness gracious
M038....Hugo's Excentria....This has to be one of the best house disks
M039....I Love Technology..Recent production from Beatmaster. Good
M085....James Bond Remix....Catchy stuff
M081....Miami Vice....Theme remix
M052....Original Rips 3....Compilation of the best PD music
M053....Pendle Europa Xmas song....Mistletoe music again
M080....Pet Shop Boys....The Manic Mix
M057....Powerpack 3 (1Mb)....Includes Vanilla Ice track
M059....Powerpack 5 (1Mb)....4 classy house tracks
M062....Random Access....Art of Noise and more. Startling acid track
M066....Sydney Youngblood....Sample of clarity. Worth a listen
M068....Sound of Silents....7 songs from Silents
M078....Zee's Hip Hop disk....Slightly aged now, but good music

GAMES

G001....Autobahn 3000....Control ball through tunnel. Hard
G004....Airwar....Fighter simulation. Good shareware game
G005....All New Star Trek (2 disks)...USS Enterprise classic. Best one
G008....Balloonacy....Destroy city from balloon
G010....Breakout....Classic bat & ball game
G011....Blizzard....Horizontal shoot-'em up. High quality
G013....Bullrun....War-game, based on US Civil War. Control Army
G014....Adventure Solutions (2 disks)....Loads of hints of commercial games. Good
G114....Buck Rogers....Shoot-'em up
G099....Cabaret Asteroids....At last a brilliantly playable version
G015....Crossfire (1Mb)....Excellent game written in AMOS
G122....Cubulus....Rubik cube type puzzler
G118....Downhill Challenge....Ski simulator
G019....Dungeon Delver (2 disks)....Difficult adventure quest
G021....Demolition Mission (1Mb)....Similar to Balloonacy, good fun
G022....Escape from Jovi....Guide ship to safety. Simplistic graphics
G029....Flaschbire....Old favourite. Get to alarm clock
G031....Gravattack....Control spaceship,. picking up keys
G038....Jeopard (1Mb)....Risk-type strategic game
G040....Holy Grail (1Mb)....Text adventure
G110....Ladybug....Pacman type game
G043....Learn and Play 1....Good for the kids. Blackboard maths, etc.
G050....Master of the Town....Use mouse to smash windows. Very addictive
G049....Megaball (1Mb) Excellent game. Improved version of Breakout
G055....Mechforce....Strategy game
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G056....Monopoly....Board game on disk
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G061....Pick up a puzzle (1Mb/2 disks)Fit the pieces. Good for the kids
G062....3D Pool....Control cue with mouse, and it's all pot luck!
G063....Pacman....The classic game still here
G060....Pipeline....Build an oil pipeline
G065....Pixie Kingdom (2 disks)....Tricky adventure game. Good
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G072....Star Trek: Next generation....Not as good as G005
G107....Serene 2....Shoot-'em up sequel
G077....Seven Tiles....Excellent speedball game from Alpha
G102....Simulations....Metro, Amigoids, Imperium and more
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G115....Survivor....Role play an alien
G100....Towers of Hanoi....Text adventure
G079....Treasure Hunt....Find the hidden treasure. Good graphics
G081....Trek Trivia....Test your Star Trek knowledge
G083....Wet Beaver Tennis....Simple, but good fun bat & ball game
G084....Wet Beaver Tennis....Simple, but good fun bat & ball game
G086....Wraithed One....Good general knowledge quiz
G088....Pair Crazy....Match the piccies
G094....Zeus....Simple puzzle game
G096....Assassins games comp....Very good. Includes Tanx and Amigoids
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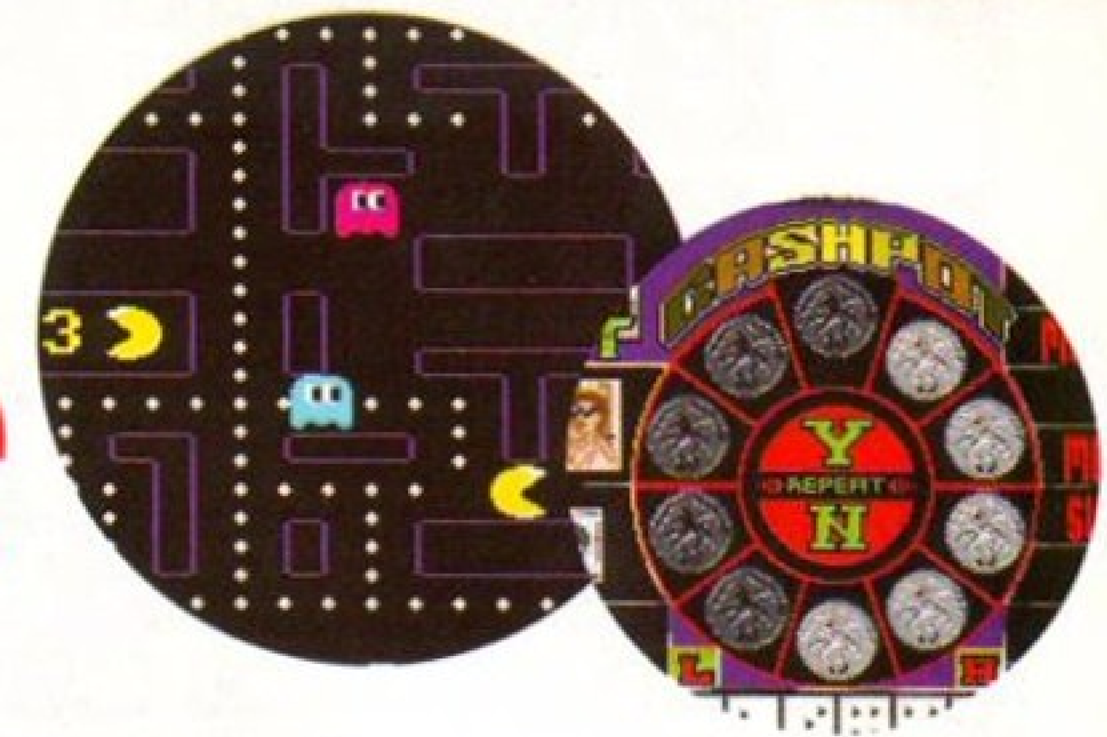
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PD Update



Stocking fillers or a life-saving utility, the Public Domain has so much to offer the cautious buyer. Know what's worth your pennies withthe thrifty **Pat McDonald.**

DIRTY CASH
DÉJÀ VU LPD47



Every single button, light and gadget has a function in *Dirty Cash*, which means you have to keep your wits about you to play properly.

An old idea that has been tweaked to perfection, *Dirty Cash* is the best fruit-machine simulator that I've seen on any computer. The idea is simple enough – start off with so much money and try and to make a profit by gambling on a *Dirty Cash* one-armed bandit.

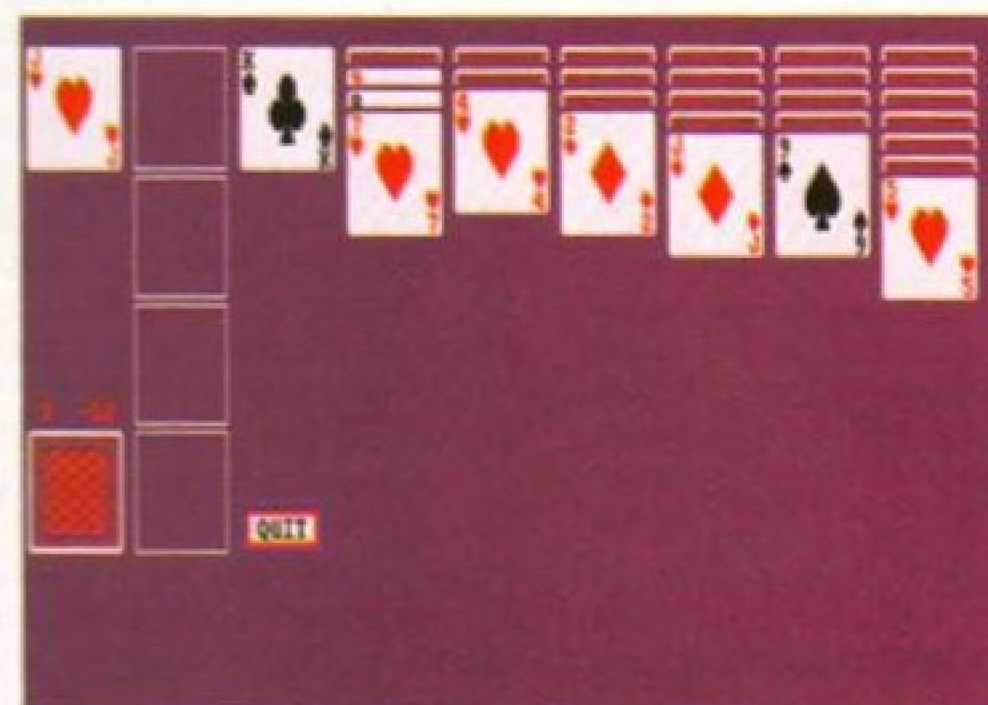
This isn't your common-or-garden simulation, oh no. All the usual spinning reels are there, plus other features that you only find on more upmarket machines (like mega-nudge and pick your prize). The many different elements add a lot to the game, as they keep you concentrating on different sub-games. How full is the cash circle? What is the jackpot? How many nudges have you accumulated? All the different factors make for a realistic feel – it really is similar to playing an arcade slot machine, except you don't lose real money.

Even if you're only slighty interested in fruities, it's hard to resist having just one spin; then another, and another. Congrats to author, Matt West, for writing an addictive program. The graphics, while not outstanding, give a fair representation of an arcade machine, even down to the carpet pattern on the loading screen.

CARD GAMES
17 BIT 1367

Here you get five card games all on one disk can't be bad, can it? And I'm pleased to say that there isn't even a lame duck in the pack. All the games are written for just one player, although some of them feature computer players.

There's a fairly good version of Cribbage, written by David Addison using that right old dinosaur ABasic (which was developed by MetaComCo way back in 1985). It's very easy to get the hang of the game, because all of the decisions are made with the mouse, and not the keyboard. It does help if you know the rules, as the program doesn't have a document file. There are also three versions of Patience (Solitaire). Blue Moon is an exercise in rearranging a full deck of 52 cards correctly in sequence and suit. Again, it's



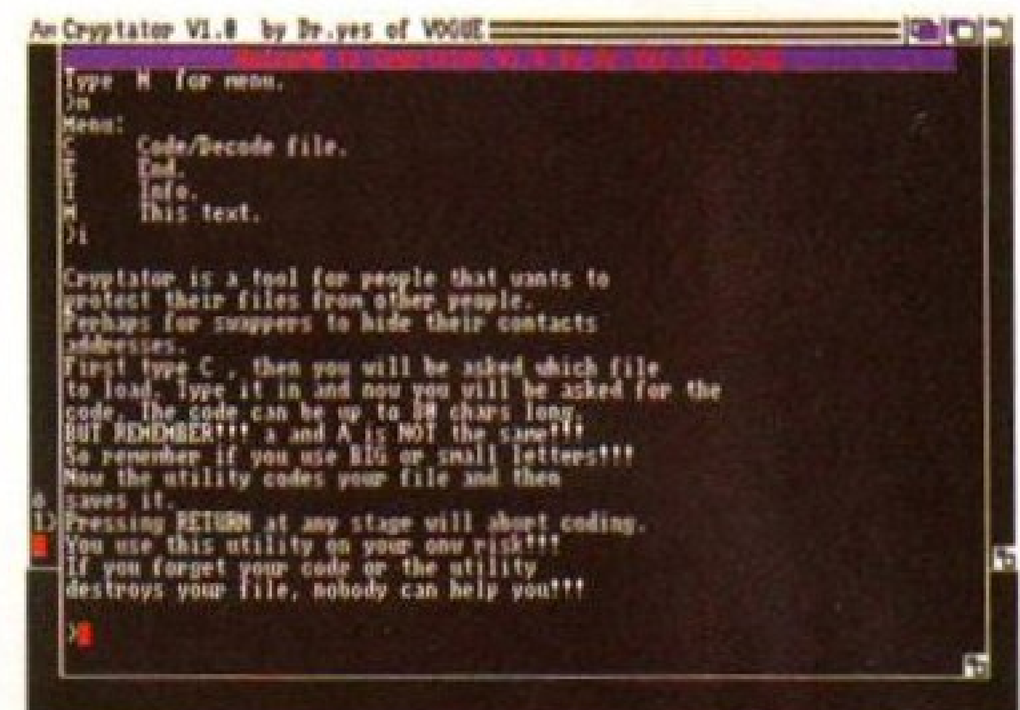
Patience isn't everyone's cup of tea, but for a quick ten minutes of deep thought there's not much to beat it.

very easy to play, and the documentation is thorough without being complicated. The author is Tim Lister. Patience is the more traditional game on the disk, using the Klondike system (seven piles of cards, with each pile being one card deeper than the pile to the right). Again, getting going is very easy, although winning is more a matter of luck than skill. It has got a certain addiction though.

King's Korner is a fairly odd game, though, played on a four-by-four grid. Any kings have to go at the corners, and there are similar rules for positioning the other picture cards. I just couldn't get the hang of it, but I"m sure more experienced players would probably have no difficulty at all.

Finally comes one of my old favourites Hearts, which is sometimes known as Black Lady. This is played against three other computer opponents, the idea being to win as many tricks as you can so that you can progress through the game. This one's got variable difficulty levels, which is just as well because I found it a bit too easy.

DR YES UTILS 1
17 BIT 1331



Cryptator may be a CLI utility, but it tells you precisely what buttons to press and how to code your files to prevent casual scrutiny.

Good heavens, a utility disk written and designed by just one person (Dr Yes/Jonas Stahre from Sweden). All the utilities are designed to be run from the Shell or CLI, although a menuing system lets you choose which program you want to use.

On the disk you will find; *Caller*, a modem telephone book to let your Amiga do all the walking; *BSure*, a bootblock saver and restorer, useful for keeping your games collection usable; *MultiStarup+*, which will run a different startup-sequence if you press a different combination of the mouse buttons and the joystick fire button.

VTST (virus test) and ShowBoot are useful for keeping viruses out of your system. Assuming that you find one, *VirusMurderer* will put it out of its misery. To round off, *Cryptator* is a protection system which lets you encode files according to a certain key. It's easy to use and fairly quick, although Jonas was quicker to point out that he's not responsible for any loss of data due to people using *Cryptator*.

It's a different set of utilities, which makes a change to the usual disks stuffed full of rippers, old versions of PowerPacker or disk repair programs that don't work properly.

CRUSADERS EUROCHART 12
NBS L616

The Eurochart is really just a set of statistics of the Crusader group's opinions on best demo, best music and so on. The presentation of such a mundane collection of data is spot on. It's interesting, funny in places and offers some murky insights into the world of the PD hacking crews. If you're thinking of doing a disk magazine, look at this to see how it should be done.

Continued on Page 192

THE BEST OF THE PUBLIC DOMAIN

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We don't list it!

GAMES

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AG.02 **Various;** Gravwars, Jackland, Pacman, Othello, Empire, Hanoi...
AG.03 **Star Trek (Agatron);** Strategy game - Tobias Richter. (2D-Mb-2 disks)
AG.04 **Monopoly;** full version of the classic property trading game!
AG.05 **Pacman 87;** Multi level version of this addictive arcade classic.
AG.06 **Various;** Cosmoroids, Amoeba, Blackjack, Backgammon, Yahtzee etc.
AG.07 **Board and Card games;** Cluedo, Othello, Klondike and Cribbage.
AG.09 **Puzzle Maker;** Jigsaw puzzles from IFF files. Plus Puzzle Pro.
AG.10 **Space Invaders;** Arcade Classic version! Plus: Lander, Amoeba...
AG.11 **Tennis;** excellent shareware sports simulation. (Mb)
AG.14 **Flascheiber;** Boulderdash style game. Almost Commercial quality!
AG.15 **Paranoid game;** Arkanoid style, including a screen designer
AG.16 **Castle of Doom;** Adventure game with graphics - beginners level
AG.17 **ST Bash;** Space Invaders style shoot-em-up, aliens are Atari ST's.
AG.18 **Golden Fleece;** Infocom quality adventure, Tron, Train, Star Fleet..
AG.22 **Return to Earth;** Elite style Space trading game, digitised sound
AG.24 **Drip;** Arcade quality painter game, China Challenge, Frogger etc.
AG.26 **Zerg;** Ultima style Role Play, World, Daleks, Callisto, Pontoon..
AG.27 **Star Trek (USA);** Strategy game. Captain the Enterprise. (2D-Mb-2 disks)
AG.28 **Quattro;** Tetris style, China Challenge, Breaker and Asteroids
AG.29 **Chess;** Superb Multi Featured! Tiles, Tetriz Two, Battleships etc.
AG.30 **Twintris;** Superb Shape dropping game! MUCH better than original!!
AG.31 **Simpsons;** vertical scrolling shoot-em-up style game! (SEUCK)
AG.32 **Legotris;** another Tetris style game, amusing digitised sound effects.
AG.34 **Tile Game;** AMOS games creator variation on the old 16 puzzle.
AG.35 **Cave Runner;** Commercial quality Boulderdash style game! Excellent!
AG.36 **Wizzys Quest;** Professional quality arcade puzzle game.
AG.37 **Ring of Zon (vol. 1);** Ultima sytle fantasy/strategy game..
AG.38 **Star Trek - Arcade game;** SEUCK produced scrolling shoot-em-up.
AG.39 **Wacko in Wonderland;** Platform game with large graphics! Cute!
AG.40 **Metagalactic Llamas;** Classic Commodore 64 game by Jeff Minter!
AG.41 **Wet Beaver;** version of original tennis game with digitised sound (Mb)
AG.42 **Games galore;** Star Trek Trivia, Pharoahs Curse, Monopoly, Mazeman, Roll On, Dad, Cosmo 2, Cat and Mouse.
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AG.44 **Sorry;** the board game, Flipper Missile, Blackjack, Video Poker etc.
AG.45 **Seven Tiles;** Superb Speedball style game with digitised effects!

GAMES (continued)

AG.46 **Megaball;** Brilliant Arkanoid style game with Editor!
AG.48 **Diplomacy;** War Strategy game
AG.49 **Eat Mine;** Emerald Mine copy. 80 levels of brain straining action.
AG.50 **Master of the Town;** Shooting Gallery. Smash Windows, lamps etc.
AG.51 **Frantic Freddy;** Platform game, good conversion of C64 favourite!
AG.52 **Block It;** Superb Puzzle game!
AG.53 **Nakamoto;** Great Platform game.

SOUNDTRACKER

SND.01 **Soundtracker;** Four versions of this favourite Music creation program.
SND.02 **Soundtracker 4:** alternative version + instruments disk (2 disks)
SND.05 **Soundtracker 8 Track;** Superb! Plus converter for 4 track files...
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AE.04 Gravitywell, Weatherman, Gravsim, Airfoil... (Age 11+)
AE.05 World data Bank; CIA world map, 3D Plot, Calendar Factory, (11+)
AE.06 Talking Spelling Tutor, Speech Toy, German Language Test, Elements, Globe, Geotime (2 disks) (Age 11+)
AE.07 Educational graphics; Technical illustrations; Biology, Astronomy etc. Some animated (eg. pumping heart) Load into Deluxe Paint etc. (Age 9+)

SLIDESHOWS

AS.01 **Boris Vallejo 1;** Professional quality graphics in interlaced HAM!
AS.05 **Exodus Real 3D show;** 9 very impressive Ray traced pictures.
AS.06 **Swimsuits;** Great pictures from the U.S. Sports Illustrated mag.
AS.12 **M.C. Escher;** Animated slideshow of Eschers paradoxical artwork...
AS.20 **Slideshow Construction;** Pictures scroll up/down, fade in/out! etc...
AS.22 **Viz;** Digitised pictures from the wonderful Viz magazine.
AS.23 **Agatron Slideshow 10;** Ray Traced pictures of Star Trek ships including shots from T. Richters impending video
AS.24 **NASA;** 14 Hi-Res digitised pics of Space Shuttle, Space Stations...
AS.25 **Fraxion Slideshow;** Fantasy pictures, expertly digitised in HAM
AS.26 **Neighbours;** Pictures from TV! (Rude comments in speech bubbles)
AS.27 **Tobias Richter Slideshow;** Hi-Res pictures with a Sci-Fi theme..
AS.28 **Gorezone;** Sick Horror pictures!
AS.29 **Colourpic;** Digitised pictures produced with Colourpic and Superpic Real Time Video digitisers.

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AU.31 **Ghostwriter;** Popular, easy to use Intro and Demo Maker (Mb)
AU.32 **Label Designer;** Design and print black & white or colour labels.
AU.34 **Game Music Creator;** Midi compatible music composition program
AU.35 **Quickbase;** Easy to use Database Ideal for address book or similar!
AU.36 **Rainbow Writer;** Demo maker, Scrolly text, 3D stars, various fonts, font edit, load Soundtracker modules!
AU.37 **mCAD;** CAD package, superb value for money, professional features!
AU.38 **Ultimate Icon Disk;** Great icon creator, nice and easy to use!
AU.39 **Red Devils Utilities 6;** 30+ utilities SID, Power Packer...
AU.40 **Red Sector Demo Maker;** Powerful program for creation of demos (Mb)
AU.41 **Mandelbrot Generator;** Superb, written with AMOS language.
AU.42 **Rippers Guide;** Various music and graphic rippers. Very good
AU.43 **Master Virus Killer;** Ultimate in Virus Killers, will detect over 124 different viruses & boot blocks!
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AU.45 **Slideshow Construction Kit;** easy to use Slideshow creator.
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AU.50 **Scene Generator;** Fractal Scene Creator with great preview facility!

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AF.02 **Fancy;** Hollywood, Park Avenue, Broadway, Camelot, Courier, Ham...
AF.03 **Publishers;** Helvetica, Akashi, Andover, Bookman, Boxie, Times...
AF.04 **Various;** Unusual, Videofonts, Large & Small fonts... Utilities.

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AD.02 **Walker 2;** Digitised animation of Walker and helicopter! (Mb)
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AD.13 **Walking Cat;** Amazing Revolving digitised animation of walking cat!
AD.18 **Puggs in Space;** Amusing cartoon of alien creature exploring Earth!
AD.21 **Busy Bee;** Amazing Sculpt 3D animation of a large flying Bee! (Mb)
AD.22 **Democreators.** Create your own demo's with; Bootwriter, Bootmaker, Bootboy, Boot generator etc...
AD.23 **Ship and Sphere;** Ray Trace film of space ship and glass sphere. (Mb)
AD.24 **NewTek Demo Reel 3;** Incredible professional demo of NewTek product range features superb sampled sounds, digitised animations... (Mb-2 disks)
AD.25 **The Run;** 3D film of Lotus chase through traffic with police car! (Mb)
AD.29 **Predators Megademo;** Brilliant demos including 2 games! (2 disks)
AD.32 **Vision Megademo IV;** Superb Digitised music and sound effects!
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AD.58 **Applecus;** Ray Traced apples replace beads on animated abacus! (Mb)
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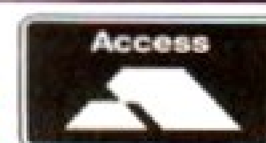
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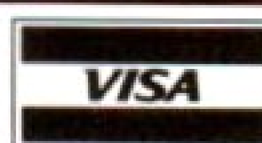
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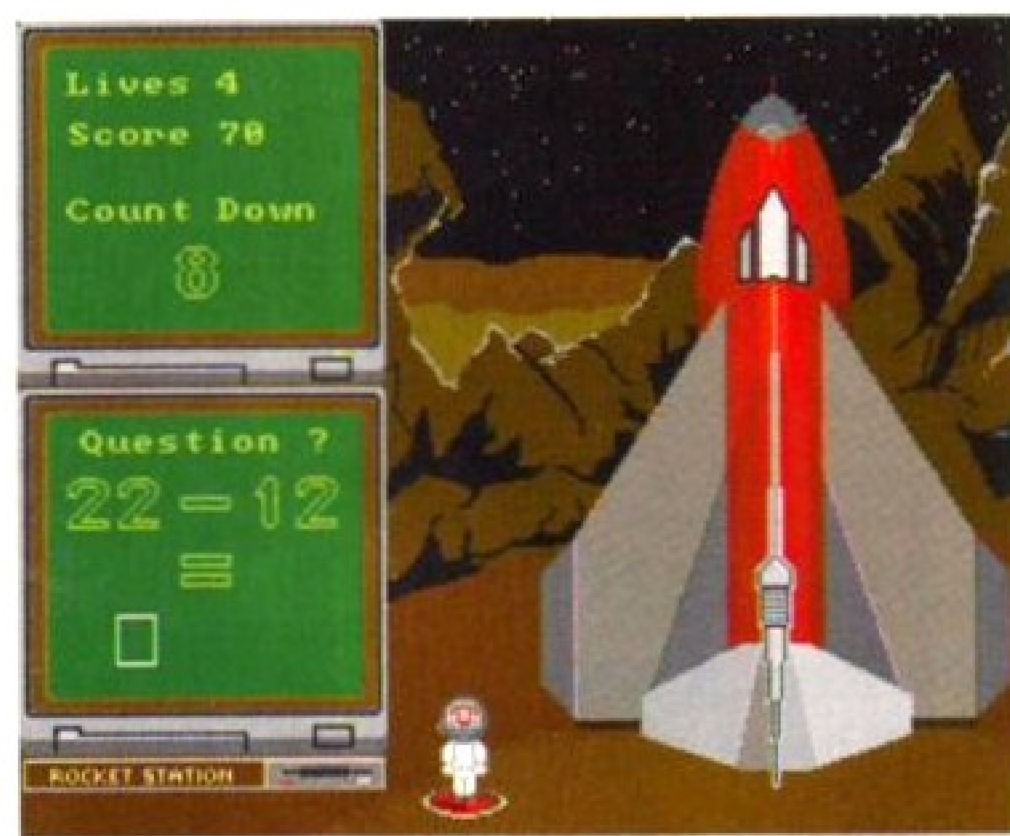
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ROCKET MATHS
DEJA VU LPD37

Delwyn S Farr must have spent months on the presentation of this educational program. It's a really simple concept (just testing the mathematical ability of a child) but it's interesting, novel and even has a hint of a game thrown in.

The plot is that you're the pilot of a rocket. You have to answer ten questions correctly to progress through the first three levels of the program – Take Off, Star Map and the Rock Storm. The computer prints the question and you have to put in the correct answer with a joystick.

The really clever bit of *Rocket Maths* is the pace. Every couple of correct answers, the rocket progresses a bit further on its journey. The fourth and final level is the landing, which plays like an arcade game (move left and right, using fire to turn on your retro rockets). Not at all amazing in concept, just very good educational software.



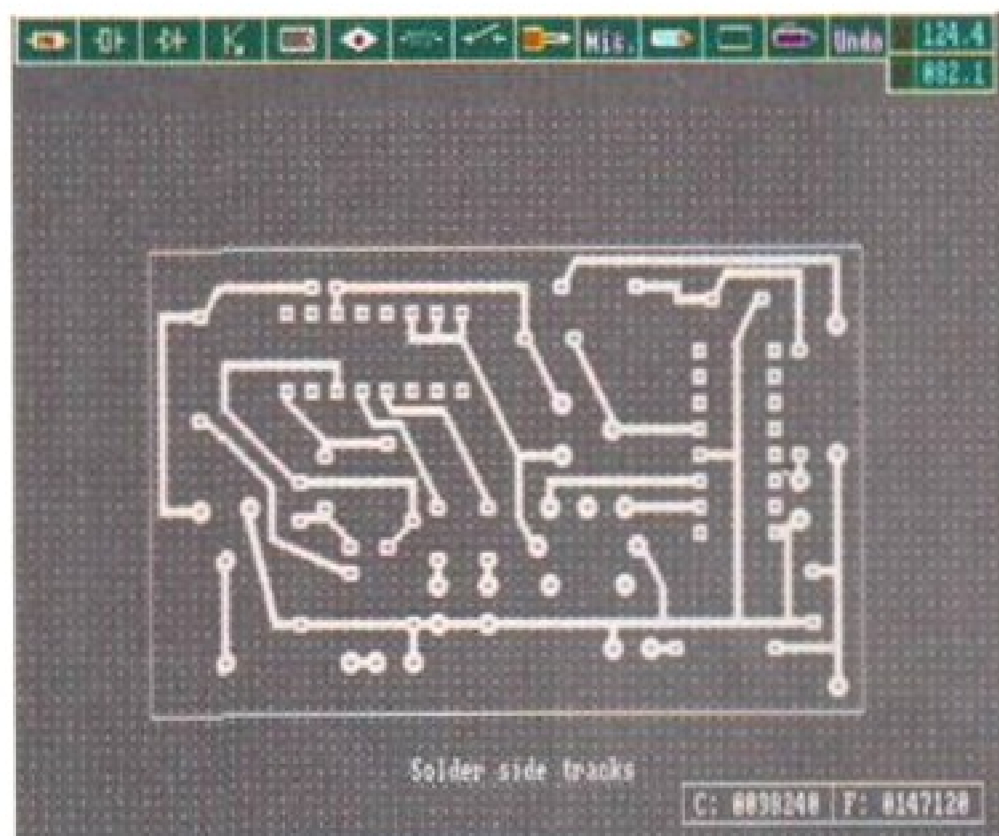
Rocket Maths gives you some cute graphic interludes every time you get a couple of answers right.

ELECTROCAD 1.4
NBS U267

Attention, electronics buffs. The latest version of *ElectroCAD* is now available – this disk is only a demo of the full program, but it's a lot more powerful than the previous version. The program is still very good at drawing schematic circuit diagrams, but it can now also be used for designing PCBs: the actual physical layout of your electronics projects can now be designed on your computer!

There are a couple of snags. *ElectroCAD* works by having a set of predrawn graphics shapes that you place on a blank worksheet. The snag is that there are literally tens of thousands of differently-shaped electronics components, which means the author (Derek Pell) has his work cut out.

He must be a bit of a maniac to keep updating the program, but at £30 for the full version (several disks) I suppose he must be doing all right. A very worthwhile program that's not just usable, but useful as well.



Not only can you design the schematics of your electronic circuits, you can design the PCB too with *ElectroCAD 1.4*.

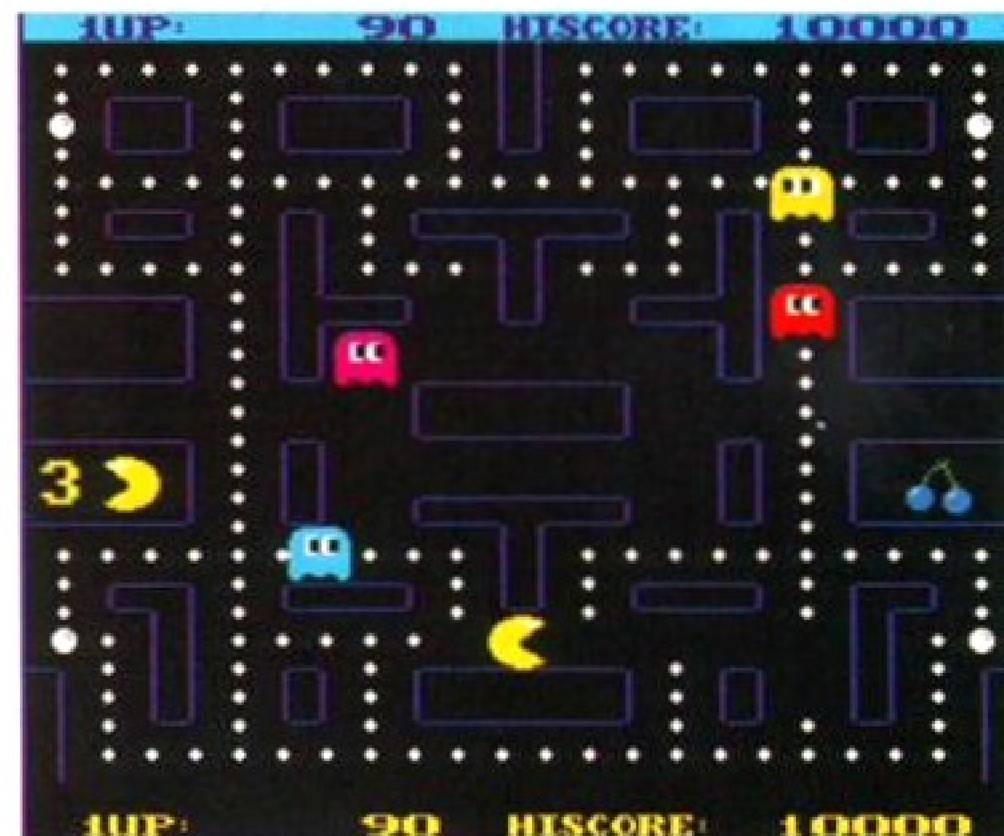
FIDDLE WITH FUN
17 BIT 1379

A few utilities and a couple of games – so what? Well, I'm happy to say that there isn't a duff program on this disk, and some of them are downright impressive.

On the games side, there's a very good version of *Pacman*. Although not a clone in the true sense (I'm reliably informed by a *Pacman* arcade nut that the game logic and ghost behaviour are totally different) it makes a damn fine game nonetheless. The usual maze is there, the ghosts and Pac look very close to the original game – it even sounds very similar! Nice one, thanks Kari Pihkala.

The other game on the disk is *Girl Actions*, funnily enough a game that's been on the *Amiga Format* Coverdisk twice. It's basically *Galaxians: Space Invaders* but with no shields.

The utilities are *Prodialler*, a modem/comms phone book; *PDCopy* version 3, a fast disk copier, which is much better than using the Workbench; LhWarp, a Lharca compatible archiving program that's faster and produces smaller files than Lharca; Lire 2.1, a text viewer that can print out different coloured text for excellent presentation; and DiskMaster 3.2, for nosing around disks looking for odd information.



Wish I'd found this before I put together Coverdisk 27 – Pacman 87 wouldn't have had a look in

AMICASH
AMIGANUTS 1158

Ever wondered where all your money goes every month? I do. So did Keith Grant, until he wrote this program to keep a record of monthly expense.

Using it is simple. You enter the date, the type of transaction involved and the amount and *Amicash* works out the balance. The good bit is that the types of transaction are fairly comprehensive: deposits, withdrawals, cheques in and out, direct debits, standing orders, interest on the account and tax on your interest are all catered for.

This sort of program needs a bit of effort to be effective: you're going to have to use it consistently for *AmiCash* to be worthwhile. But at least you'll know where your money has gone.



A bit of clicking and typing, and *AmiCash* will soon tell you where your money is being splashed around.

MORIA V3.00
PD SOFT SMAUG 149

FRPG, that's what I say. fantasy role-playing games – you know the sort: Dungeons and Dragons, Swords and Sorcery. Moria is a Unix C Port, meaning that the original was developed on a very large computer (I believe originally at the University of Oklahoma). James E Wilson of UC Berkeley designed the Unix C version, and this is a direct version of that program with some pull-down menus and graphics to make it a bit more playable.

There is no real objective in an FRPG. You simply design a character (who can be either human or exotic), then give it a name and a career class (fighter, mage, priest, rogue or ranger). After that you must buy some equipment and go forth to conquer the levels of a massive dungeon.

Moria operates by key presses – p is for purchase, b for bash and so on – and the pull-down menus just serve to remind you of exactly what they are. The graphics are quite pathetic for the Nineties, and you might think I'm not impressed.

You would be wrong however. There's something about *Moria* – it gives you a certain amount of detail, like, for example, a brief life story for each of your new characters, and different behaviour patterns for the creatures that you meet (hint: don't stop to chat with a black dragon). *Moria* hasn't got the looks, but it's got the hook of an FRPG – and I really, really enjoy playing it, if only because it's a bit more long-term than most games these days. The shopkeepers haggle, the beggars whine and the bravos sneer and menace. *Moria* has bags of atmosphere.

PD TOP TEN UTILITIES
SPD (HASTINGS)

1) Red Sector Demo Maker
2) Master Virus Killer V2.1
3) Two Player Soccer League
4) Sidney and Friends
5) Quick n Silver
6) Flexibase
7) Llamatron
8) System Checkers
9) ProTracker 1.2B
10) Pom Pom

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V028 SPELLCHECKER Current glossary contains over 9,000 words. more words can be added.
V029 HOUSE HOLD INVENTORY means of maintaining all your House hold possessions.
V041 DPAINT ART Conatins loads of pictures for you to mess around with.
V048 TV GRAPHICS,VIDEO GRAPHICS Various Utilities for Video Production (8)
V085 THE RED SECTOR INC DEMO CREATOR This is the best Demo creator to date on the amiga.
V086 VIDEO PRODUCTION (2) Both disks Packed with video & genlock utilities.
V108 AMIBASE V3.76 This is the Most popular Amiga Database. Very good
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GAMES

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1420 DTRIS Played Tetris Well, This is the best version to Date (With 2 Player option)
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1534 THE HOLY GRAIL Text adventure simular in styleto the inforgam games.
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1580 NETHACK A fantasy game in which your goal is to retrieve the Amulet (2,2D)
1622 LORE OF CONQUEST War game simular in concept to the game RISK.
1664 THE CASTLE ADVENTURE Excellent new Text adventure simular to the infocom
1665 BATTLE FORCE ROLE PLAYING Fight in robot form within this excellent game.
1695 NAPOLENIC WAR SIMULATOR Excellent program sent direct by the author.
1707 IMPERIUM Another excellent strategy game based apon Roman time.
1735 ASTERIODS 'THE ORIGINAL' Another old classic. Remember that Classic.
1747 LLAMATRON GAME 2001 By Jeff Minter Briliant stuff & Excellent production
1749 SCRAMBLE 'The Original'Remember that old classic well is now on the Amiga.
1769 SKATE TRIBE Skate board game simular in style to skate or die. Excellent.
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1816 SUPER TWINTRIS The final version is here. Totally playable & all levels complete.
1818 RAPHAELS REVENGE The only Pd beat' em up game with an armed Teenage Turtle.
1870 PATIENCE'S & DOMINOS The famous card game, this is the best version to date.
1964 AMIGA COLUMNS Famous convertsion of the original game columns. Tetris variant
1974 ASSASSINS Vol.4 Jumper, Gomoku, Jumpy, Turbo Duel and Kwndine.
1975 ASSASSINS Vol.5 GoLonly,RetaliatorRaid.
1977 POM POM GUNNER Shoot down the incoming world war II air planes.
1981 TRUCKIN ON See Format 26 for review (2)
1984 AIR WARRIOR The first real flight simul-ator on the amiga with various Air planes to Fly
1989 ZEUS THE REAL GAME: Excellent block puzzle based game. another Tetris variant.

AMOS PUBLIC DOMAIN

APD146 FRUIT MACHINE SIMULATOR
APD151 UNDERSTANDING AMOS The Amos Tutorial Program Disk. A must
APD163 THE SAMPLE EDITOR V1.2
APD176 AMOS DATABASE MASTER
APD190 BLACK BELT KARATE GAME
APD198 BOMBS FROM BAGDAD
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APD215 FRACTAL WORKSHOP
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APD258 GOLDRICK Platform and ladders
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APD302 PAINT V1.6
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1669 MADONNA (2) Shes back with more excellent pictures colour pictures.
1671 MAGICIAN ANIM VERSION * 2 Anothr Excellent ray traced Animtion. recommend
1698 REINCARNATION OF SGT (2) PEPPER Freaky colourful graphics. Reviewed in AF26
1713'PLAGUE OF DOOM The Ultimate Music selection collection disks (2)
1715 SINKING DEMAND/VECTOR is a cool looking mega demo with colourful effects
1720 MANIC RAVES BY EMDLESS PIRACY Excellent hard hitting tracks (2 disks)
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1762 TERMINATOR II SLIDE SHOW There's some excellent pictures from the film **(2)**
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2006 OVER DIMENSION BY AERO 91
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2022 CLANCE GAME - Sub strategy game.
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2024 ROBOZONE PREVIEW
2026 ROBOCOD PREVIEW
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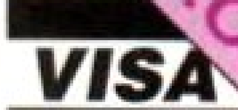
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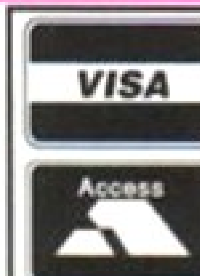
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H 650 OPTIMUM PRESSURE CRISIS (1 MB) Great series of animated slides
H 652 YET MORE CLASSY ANIMATIONS 3 Latest works from Steve.
H 653 YET MORE CLASSY ANIMATIONS 4 ......and more.
YET MORE CLASSY ANIMATIONS 5 Final in the series
H 660 AFT AGILITY: (1 MEG)..Another stealthy anim from Eric Shwartz
H 664 COLOUR CYCLING Amazing slides/amim
X110 FRAXION HORROR Great cartoon graphic demo of nasty stuff.

POWER DEMOS

(All demos in this section require loads of memory)

P 001/2	WALKER DEMO 1 (2 MEG 2 DISKS)
P 003/4	WALKER DEMO 2 (2 MEG 2 DISKS)
P 021-026	UPGRADE(1.5 MEG 2 DRIVES 6 yes 6 disks!!!) multi part anim
P 010/11	HEADKICK ANIM (2 MEG 2 DISKS plus HARD-DRIVE)
P 012/3/4	STATION AT KHERN (2 MEG 3 DISKS)
P 030/1	DRAGONS LAIR 2 GAME DEMO Superb (3 MEG, 2 DISKS)
P 032/3/4	BUZZED Great Ray traced anim (2 MEG, 3 DISKS)
P 035/6/7/8	AUTOMATED LIGHT (BATTLESTAR GALACTICA) (3 MEG, 4 DISKS)
P 044/5	ANTI LEMMING DEMO (2 MEG)Excellent Eric Shwartz animation.
P 046/7	THE DATING GAME (3 MEG 2 DISK SET) 4 mins long anim!! Truly impressive Eric Schwartz demo
P 050-3	TOBIAS RITCHER: LANDING (4 MEG) (4 DISKS) Brilliant!

MUSIC

M 005 MAHONEY & KAKTUS Brilliant music disk
M 030 DIGITAL CONCERT 2: Over 12 mins of mixed house music.
M 200/1/2 SAE AMAZING TUNES 2 (3 DISKS 1 MEG)...Superb!
M 212 MAG FIELDS CHIP FESTIVAL....Another huge collection.
M 226 DYNAMITE BEATS 4...Another very classy music disk from Max
M 230 DEXION PARTY MUSIC AND PICCYS....A good disk as always
M 232 ALCATRAZ MUZIC.......Classy presentation, 3 good tracks!!!
M 269 ALCATRAZ MORE THAN MUSIC. Superb.
M 311 LIONS: INXS (1 MEG) 2 tracks of remixed INXS.
M 314 MAG FIELDS: SPACED OUT 1 (1 MB) Beaty, housey music.
M 315 MAG FIELDS: SPACED OUT 2 (1 MB) More of the same. Good.
M 316 LSD: DON'T PANIC (1 MB) Well presented good sounds
M 330 SILENTS: FULL POWER: 9 good tracks
M 524/5 BRUNOS MUSIC BOX 2: Dr Snuggles Anim + Um-pah

ANIMATION SPECIAL!

The works of Tobias Richter. All require 1Mb.

H 002 Agatron Anim. 2 Misc - Jet fighter landing. Basic.
H 003 Agatron Anim. 3 Star Trek - Shuttle fly past.
H 005 Agatron Anim. 5 Star Trek - Klingon fires Torpedoes
H 007 Agatron Anim. 7 Star Wars - Fighter doing loops etc
H 009 Agatron Anim. 9 Star Wars - Fighter flyby. Impressive
H 010 Agatron Anim. 10 Star Trek - Enterprise in dry dock
H 011 Agatron Anim. 11 Tron - Tank vs Deaktivator. Good vectors
H 012 Agatron Anim. 12 Tron Animation. Not one of the best
H 013 Agatron Anim. 13 Misc - Robo 1. A robot waving.
H 014 Agatron Anim. 14 Star Trek - Workbee and Reliant. 3 Shots.
H 017 Agatron Anim. 17 Star Trek - TWOK Animation. Short but OK.
H 018 Agatron Anim. 18 Star Trek - Enterprise fly by. Short
H 020 Agatron Anim. 20 Misc - Huey the helicopter taking off
H 023 Agatron Anim. 23 Star Trek - Fleet Manoevre. Brilliant
H 024 Agatron Anim. 24 Misc - A pen signing 'Tevox'
H 025 Agatron Anim. 25 The Run. Superb car chase. A classic
H 026 Agatron Anim. 26 Misc - A ship rocking at sea. Poss Bug.
H 027 Agatron Anim. 27 Misc - A book opening!
H 028 Agatron Anim. 28 Star Trek - Shuttle and Enterprise
H 029 Agatron Anim. 29 Star Wars - Millenium Falcon in chase
H 030 Agatron Anim. 30 Star Wars - Millenium Falcon goes hyper
H 031 Agatron Anim. 31 Misc - Porsch rising out of a table
H 032 Agatorn Anim. 32 Space - Space probe flying away.
H 033 Agatron Anim. 33 Space - Space probe passing. Short.
H 034 Agatron Anim. 34 Star Trek - The Space Office. A bit short
H 035 Agatron Anim. 35 Space - Space probe flying away.
H 036 Agatron Anim. 36 Star Trek - Bird of pray loop de loop!
H 037 Agatron Anim. 37 Misc - Tobias goes knackers!

EDUCATION

E 006/7 LEARN AND PLAY..Games plus maths and words (kids aged 5+)
E 008 TALKING COLOURING BOOK.....Draw the pictures then colour them

GAMES

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G 117 EATMINE Addictive Boulderdash clone. (not A1500 etc)
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G 136 DRIP Very tricky painter type game. Almost commercial quality!
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G 143 JEOPARDY (1 MEG)....Version of the board game Risk!
G 152 PD GAMES COMPO 9....Battlemech, Bullrun (Battle Sim) and more
G 154 BATTLEFORCE (1 MEG)....Strategy battle game.
G 159 ANTEP (1 MEG)....RPG also SLOTS, a good car chase game.
G 170 MEGABALL. The ultimate PD Breakout game?
G 171 ZEUS Simple but addictive puzzle game. Great.
G 175 CUBULUS. Great 'Rubics Cube' type puzzle. Excellent.
G 178 WIZZYS QUEST (1 MEG) Super game for PD. (Shareware).
G 179 LLAMATRON By Jeff Minter, blast the beasties (Shareware).
G 180 BLOCK IT 1.2 A tough but addictive puzzle game.
G 181 JT's GAME COMPENDIUM Some old, but most are new.
G 182 MENTAL IMAGE GAMEDISK 1 A superb compilation of new games
G 185 BLACKJACK LAB More serious than a game, inc tutor!
G 187 SUPER SKODA CHALLENGE (1MB) A Lada fun for 4 players.
G 189 NO MANS LAND (1MB) A good 2 player shoot each other game.
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NBS PD UPDATE 9 available early December. If you are a Utility fan, this one will contain an invaluable utility list. Just send a stamped self-addressed envelope to receive your copy. (Exg customers will be mailed theirs free)

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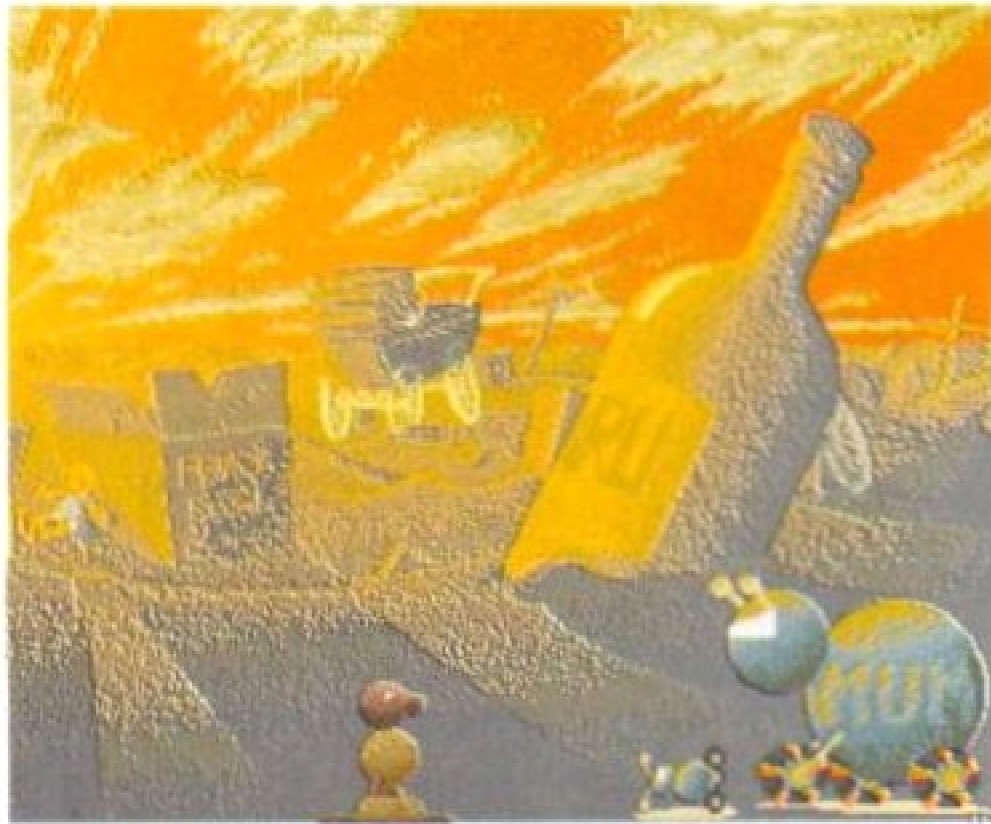
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TOONS – LITTLE STORY II
17 BIT, DISK 1374



If strange animated characters appeal to you, then you should have a look at this demo. We're not really sure what the little blobby main character is supposed to be, but the way he treats a defenceless little robot in this clip deserves a strong reprimand! The animation style is rather odd, but it still manages to be rather effective. The characters have a weird quality all of their own, and well worth looking out for in future presentations. It would be nice if the clip was a little longer though.

DYNAMIC HI-RES SLIDESHOW
17 BIT, DISK 1306



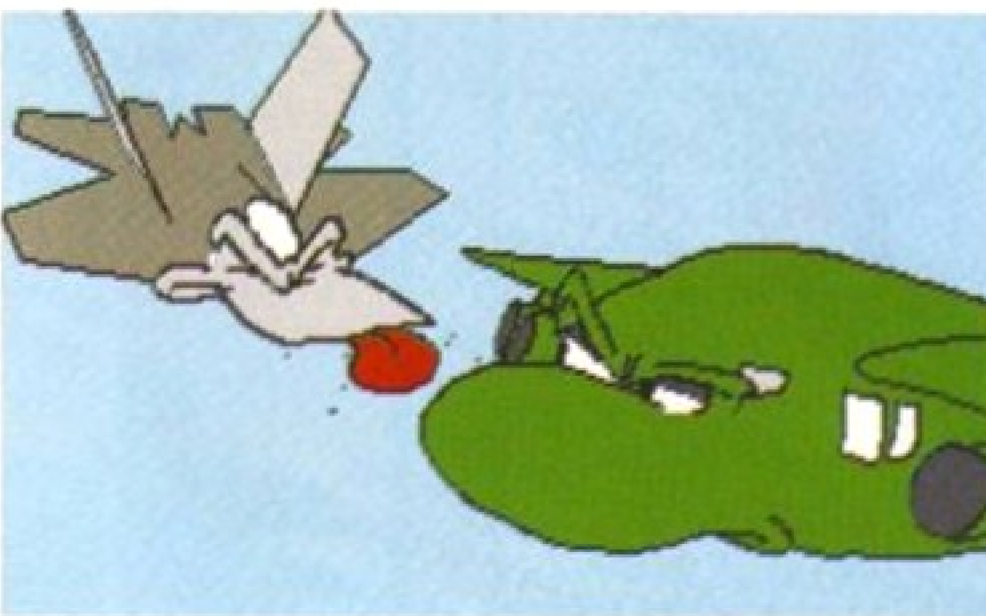
This disk contains five pictures showing off Newtek's Dynamic high resolution mode. The subject matter includes such elements as a horror-film character, a rock-horror character and... er... a horror comic character, so there's lots of diversity here! The pictures are pretty well digitised, featuring clear colours and sharp edges – even if the subject matter is a little grim!

THE CHIPS ARE UP!
AMIGANUTS UNITED, DISK 1160

Hoorah! Mr Potato Head makes a return to the Amiga! This time, he takes part in a longer clip than in his previous outing, as he performs a death-defying high-dive into a damp sponge. Pretty stupid, I trust you'll agree. Well, he's a potato, what did you expect!

Anyone who has seen Chris Hill's earlier Potato Head demo will know what to expect here, but it has to be said that this time he has produced a much better clip, with larger characters and even shifts in the viewpoint. If he keeps on improving his work like this, then Chris will definitely become one of the top names to look out for in the realm of PD animations – maybe even rivalling the incredibly famous Eric Schwartz himself! Speaking of which...

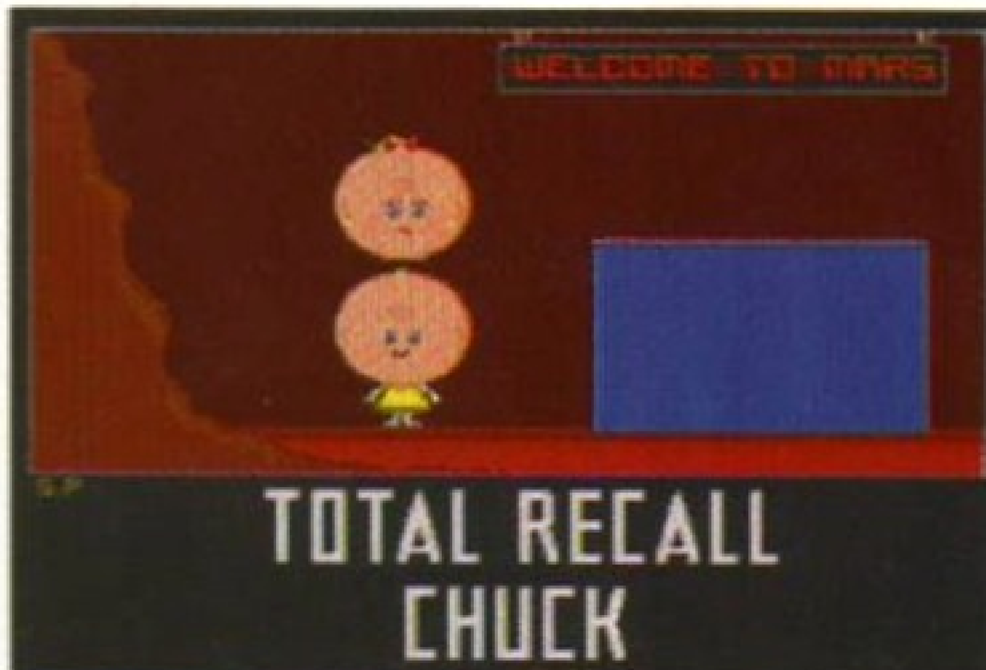
ATF AGILITY
NBS, DISK H660



Keeping with the tradition of Demo Zone, here is this month's Eric Schwartz animation! In yet another of the Aerotoons production, a sprightly little Advanced Tactical Fighter dogs a lumbering bomber, but the old chap has something up his sleeve to keep the young whippersnapper in his place!

There's not much you can say about Eric Schwartz that hasn't already been said on many occasions. He is the producer of some of the finest Amiga cartoons you could ever hope to see, and *ATF Agility* is no exception. Schwartz fans boost your collection, those who have never seen his stuff before – start right here!

YET MORE CLASSY ANIMATIONS VOLUME FIVE
NBS, DISK H654



Well... this is it... the last of disks to feature animations of that dear little character, Chuck. The disk contains the usual collection of neat little clips, including a swansong for Chuck, featuring a show of all his costumes to date.

Fans of Steve Packer (the creator of the *Classy Animations* series) needn't get too upset though, since he promises to come up with some new stuff very soon indeed. Turn the page to find out more...

HARDCORE III
17 BIT, DISK 1371

TECHNO ATTACK
17 BIT, DISK 5510



PD music demos are beginning to shift away from the usual ethereal pieces, with their predictable chord progressions and dodgy melodies, and more disks are appearing packed with hard-core techno-dance tracks. These two disks from 17 Bit are the latest examples of the trend. Both feature a version of Prodigy's 'Charly', the best version of which is featured on the Techno Attack disk. The rest of this volume is taken up with new tracks patched together using various sampled riffs and breaks to decent effect.

Hardcore III is all cover versions, featured alongside 'Charly' are versions of T-99's 'Anasthasia' and Cubic 22's 'Night in Motion'. All three tracks are pretty well converted, but they seem to lack the punch of their record counterparts. Still, it's cheaper than buying another remix 12 inch!



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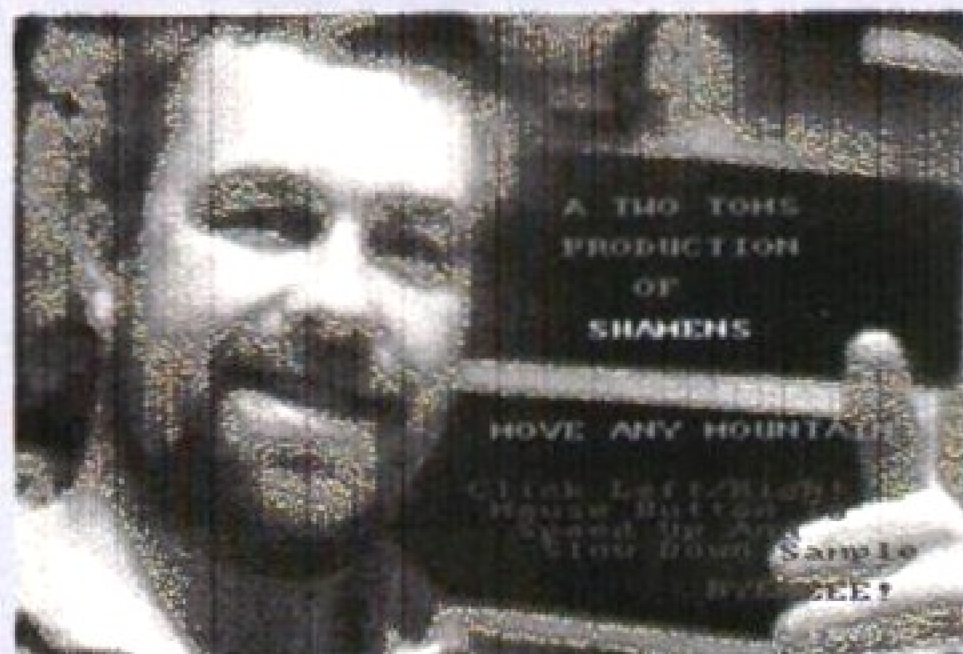
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THE SHAMEN – PROGEN
17 BIT, DISKS 1399 AND 1400

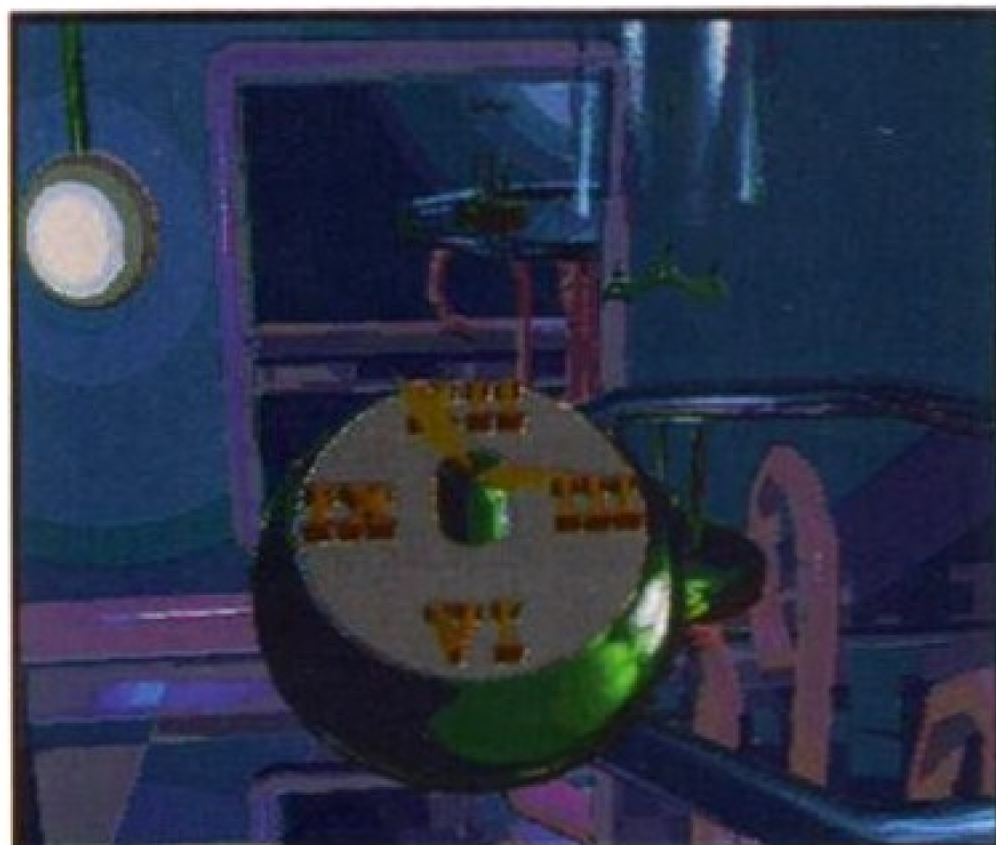
MOVE ANY MOUNTAIN
17 BIT, DISK 1380

It's a bit of a shame that The Shamen didn't manage to achieve their current level of (well-deserved) success while Will Sinot tragically died. Their current fame is plain to see though, with a large number of PD tunes based around their tracks, the most frequent of which has to be Progen. 17 Bit has two versions of the hit, the first being a complete sample of the original (and best) version supplied on two disks. The contents of disk 1380 were inevitable really, with the release of the Progeny CD containing samples from the track making it easy for would-be producers to put together their own versions of the song. This mix just seems to lack the power and energy of the original version however, being a fairly simple rendition of the track. Still, I'm sure there are bound to be quite a few more...





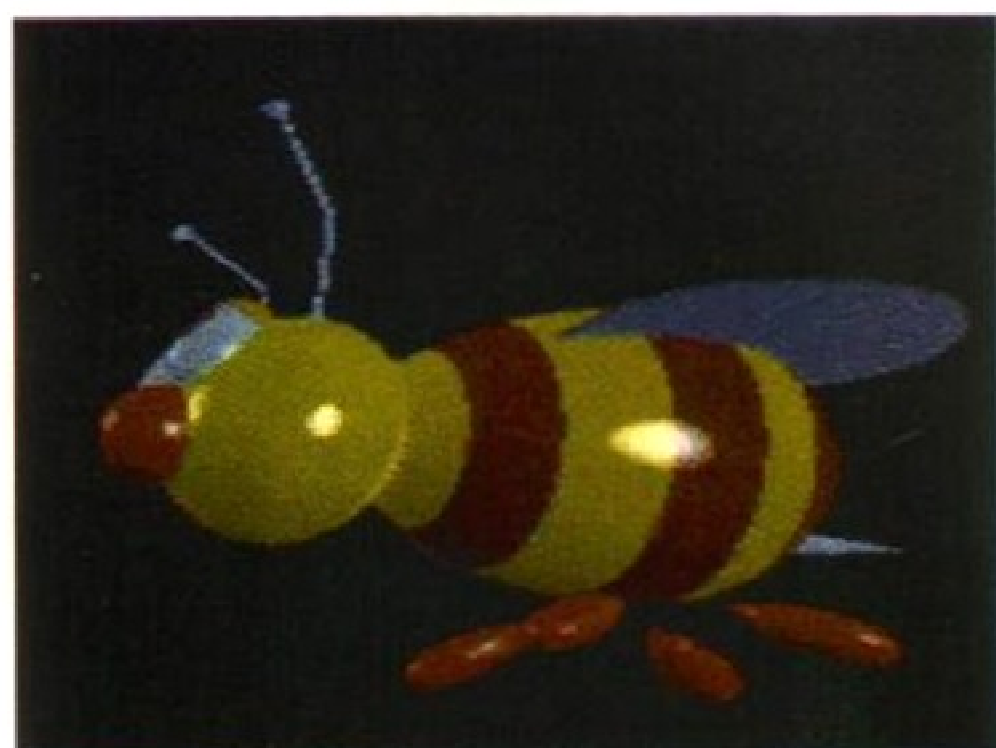
TIME FLIES
AMIGANUTS UNITED, DISK 1169



WARPDRIVE
AMIGANUTS UNITED, DISK 1165



BUSY BEE
AMIGANUTS UNITED, DISK 1166

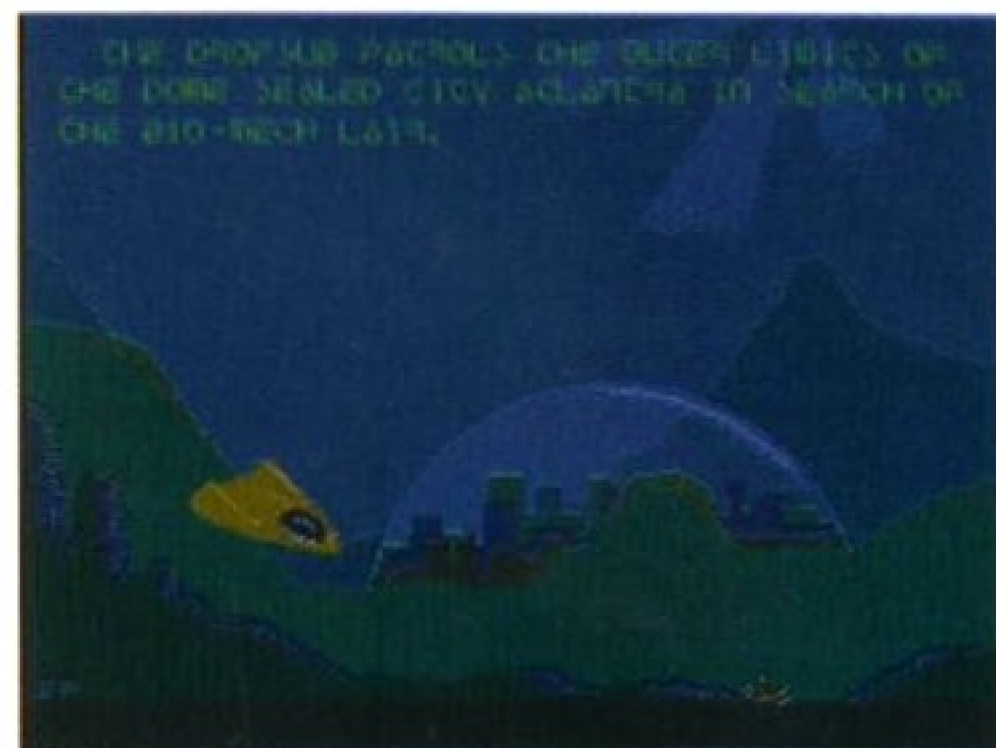


ORBITERS
AMIGANUTS UNITED, DISK 1167



Amiganuts have always been instrumental in bringing some of the finest ray-traced Amiga animations to the attention of the public, but this month they've surpassed themselves by releasing not one, not two, not even three, but four... yes FOUR... ray-traced animations in one go. The clips range from the simple Orbiters, which features some revolving silver spheres to the more complex Busy Bee (quite obvious what this is) and Warpdrive (featuring a colourful cruiser employing a Star Trek-style warp). The cream of the crop has to be Time Flies. This piece features a nicely-drawn clock opening up its case to fly around the room before returning to the table. A beautifully donepiece of animation!

OPTIMUM PRESSURE CRISIS
NBS, DISK H650



After announcing the end of the Chuck series, Steve Packer has changed his style somewhat. Optimum Pressure Crisis is the first in his new style and shows a great deal of promise for future disks. The plot is basically a science-fiction story, telling of a seek-and-destroy team looking for a creature that has been terrorising the human colonists of a water planet. The animation is loaded in sections, each revealing a new section of the story. Another notable extra not found on Steve's earlier demos is the fact that there is a soundtrack, and a pretty good one to boot! If he releases more demos of this quality, then Steve Packer is another challenger to the Schwartz animation crown.

TPI DANCE EP 3
AMIGANUTS UNITED, DISK 1163

This disk is for serious rave-maniacs only! There are no graphics, all that the disk contains is a collection of six rave tracks. Everything you'd expect to hear while shaking down your funky thang in a field is here - pacy, synthetic drums, looped vocal lines, discordant melodies and frantic basslines - they're all here. If you can't afford the price of a rave party or a collection of dance singles, then have a quick listen to this. You can then get down in your own home for very little cost!

PD TOP TEN DEMOS
SPD (HASTINGS)

1) Virtual Worlds
2) Budbrain Megademo 2
3) Frankiln Fly Again
4) The Simpsons
5) System Violation
6) Congaman
7) No Tech
8) Bunsen Burner
9) Budbrain Megademo 1
10) Alpha Flight Megademo

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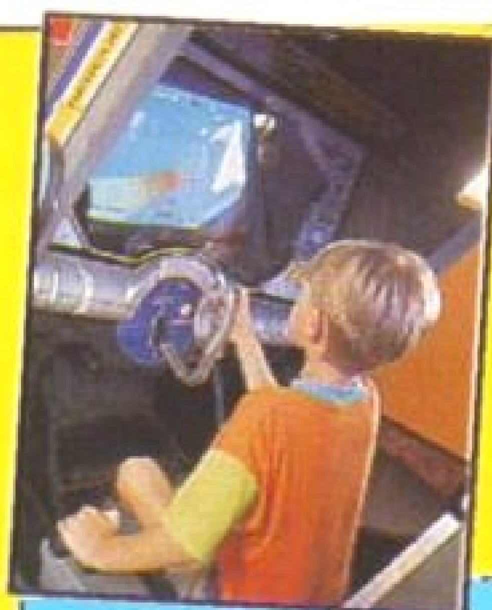
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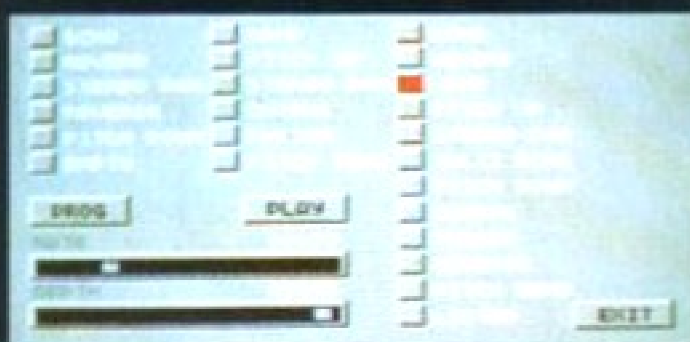


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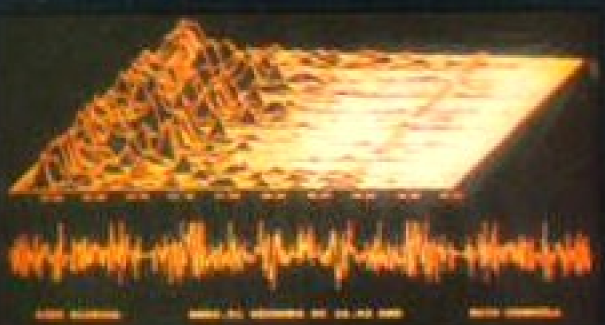


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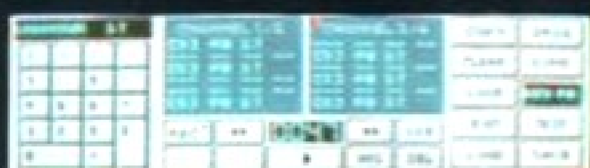
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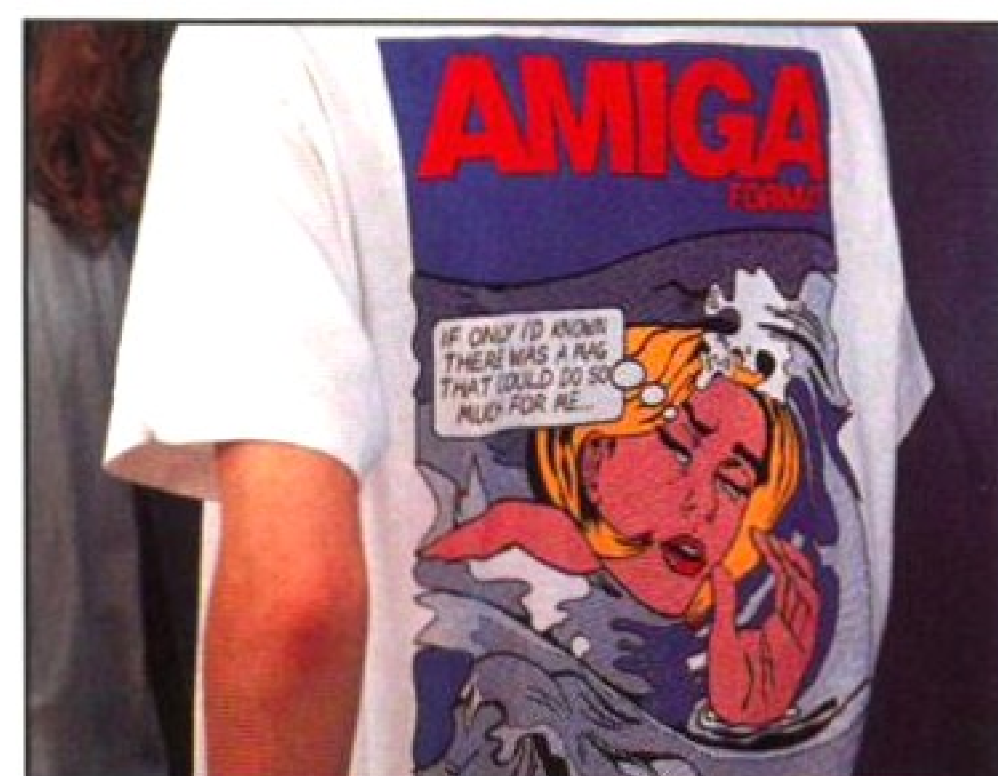
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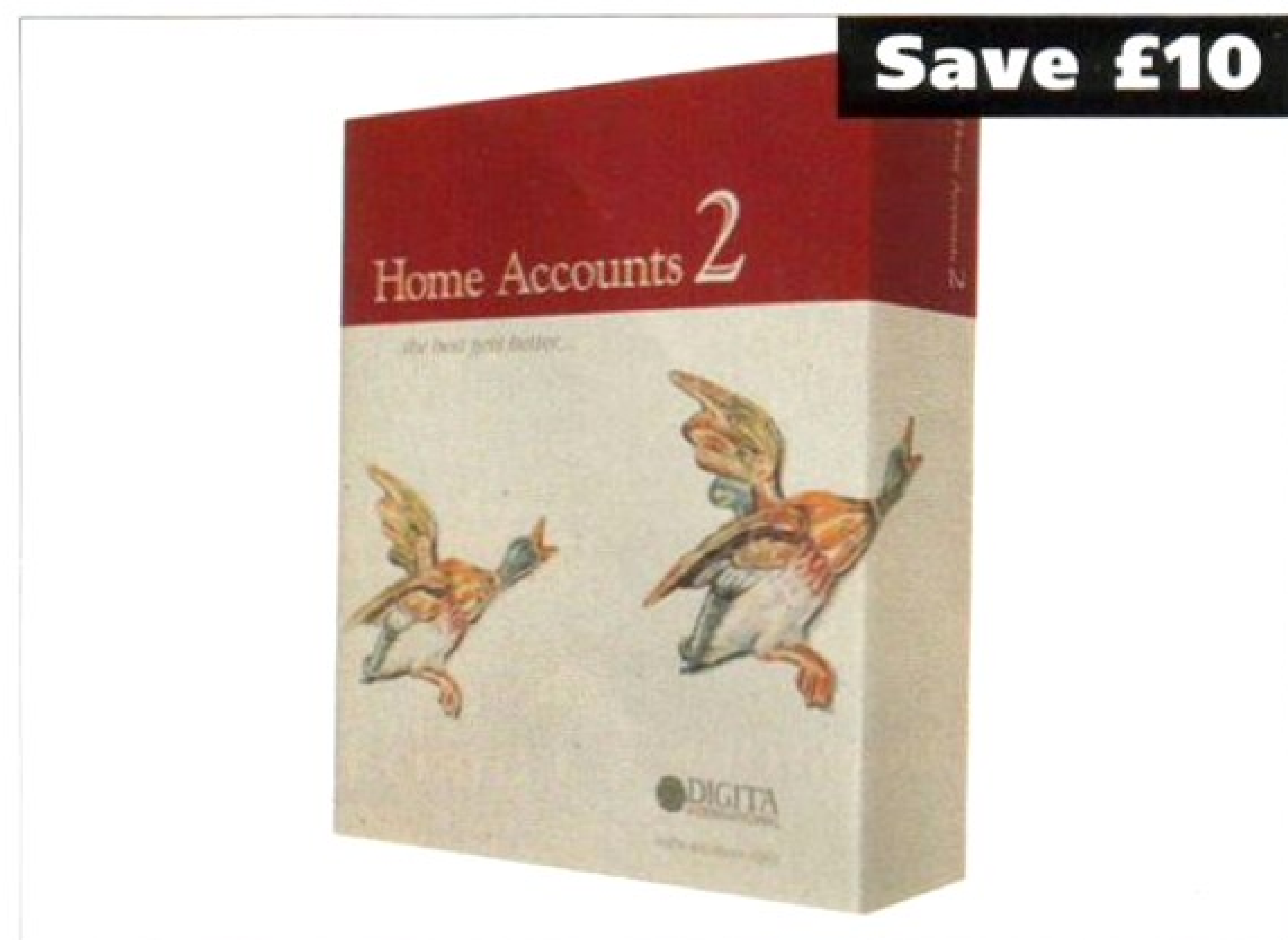
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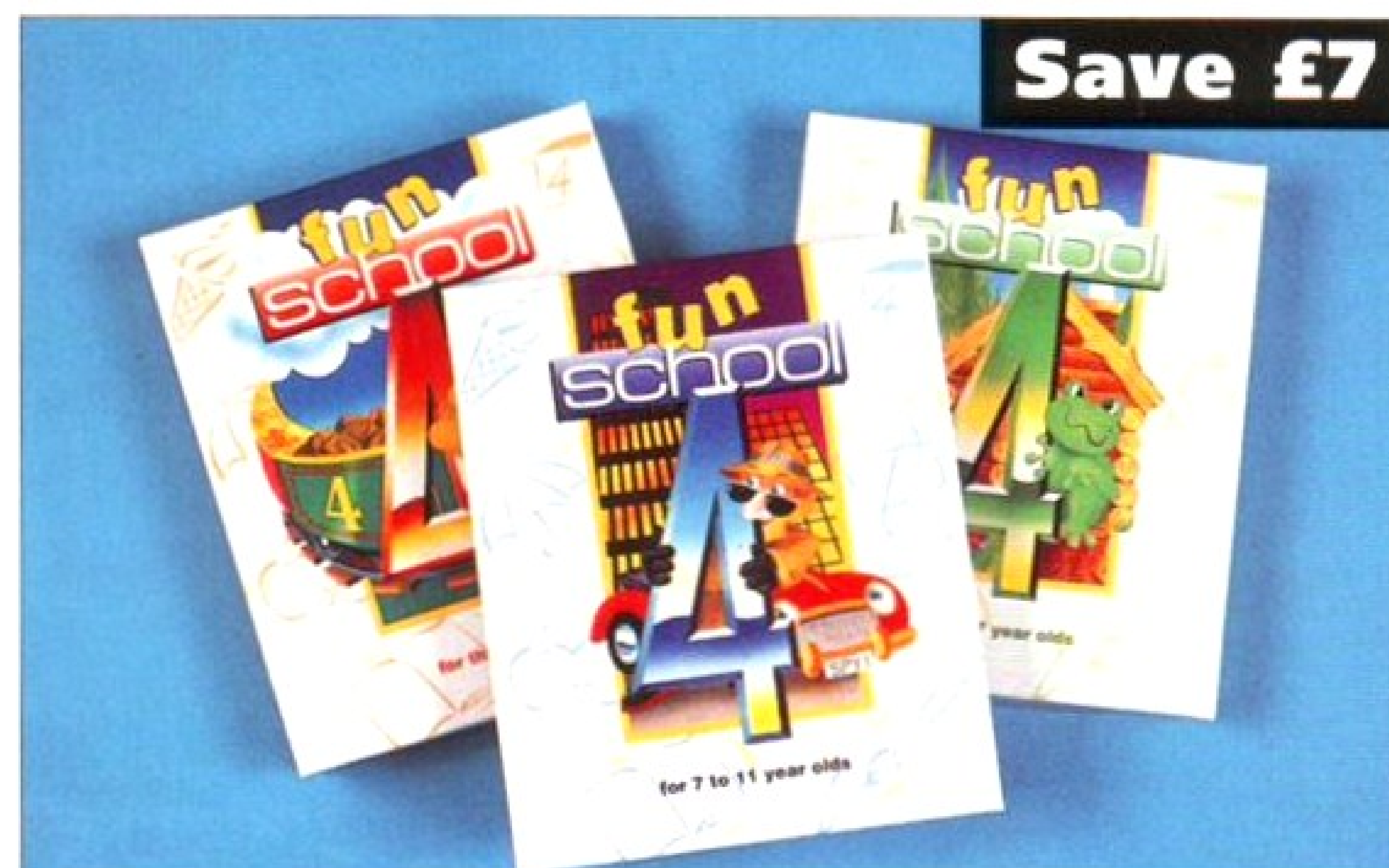




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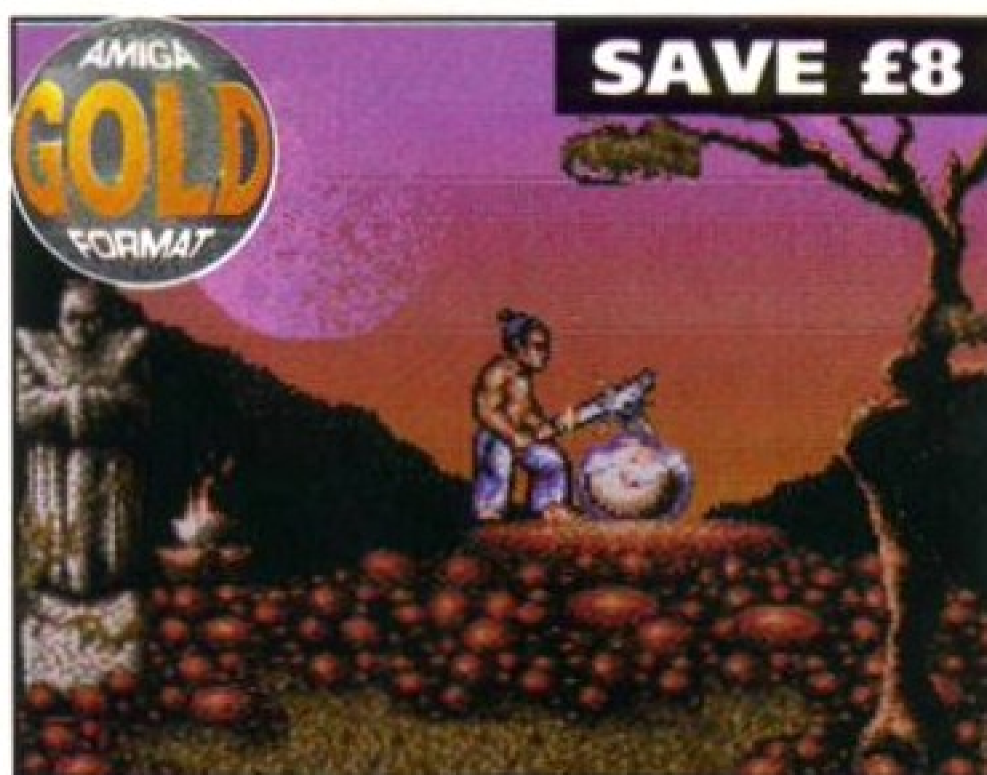
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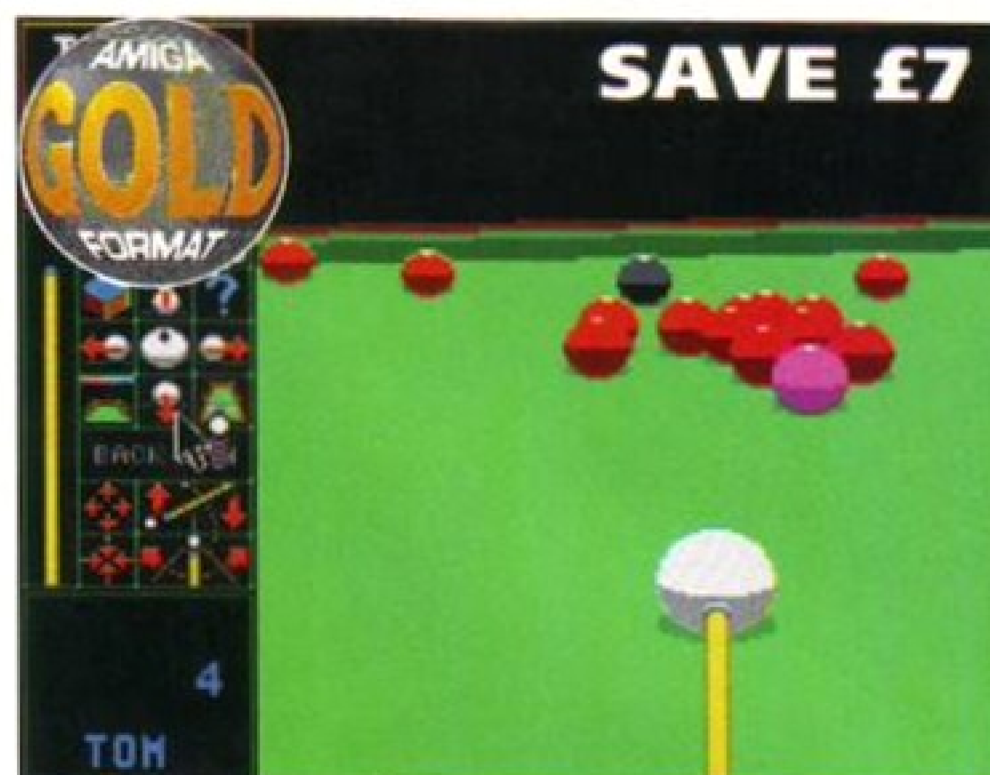
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First Samurai

If you haven't played the demo on Coverdisk 28, you should do! You'll be amazed by the look and sound of this oriental seek-and-slay game, but you'll realise the hidden depths of gameplay, too…

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Jimmy White's Snooker

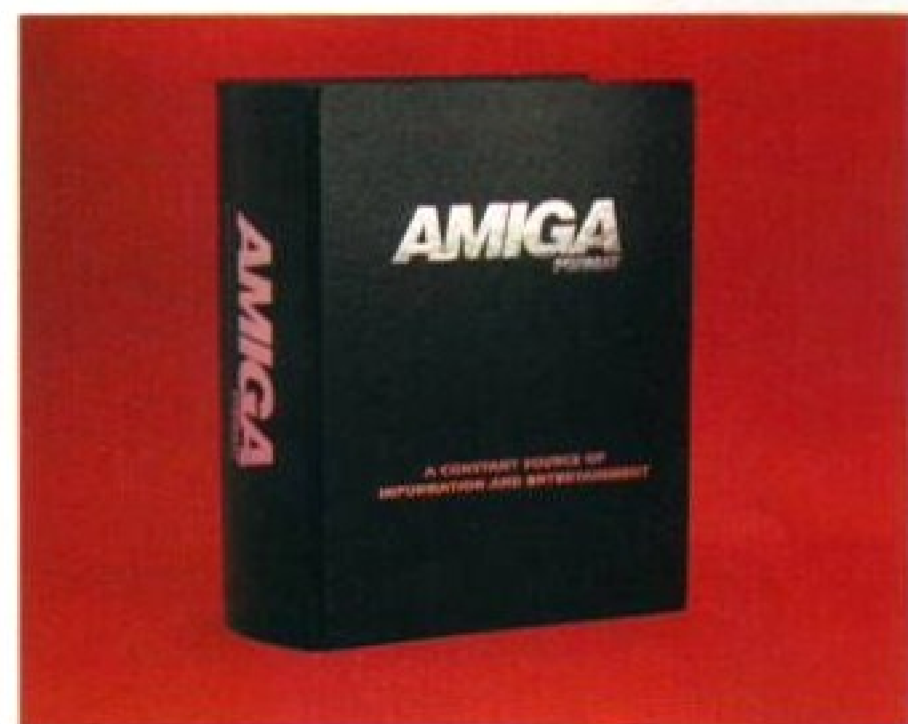
The Format Gold snooker game, with an amazingly playable 3D system conceived by master programmer Archer McClean. One of the most enjoyable games of the year to date.

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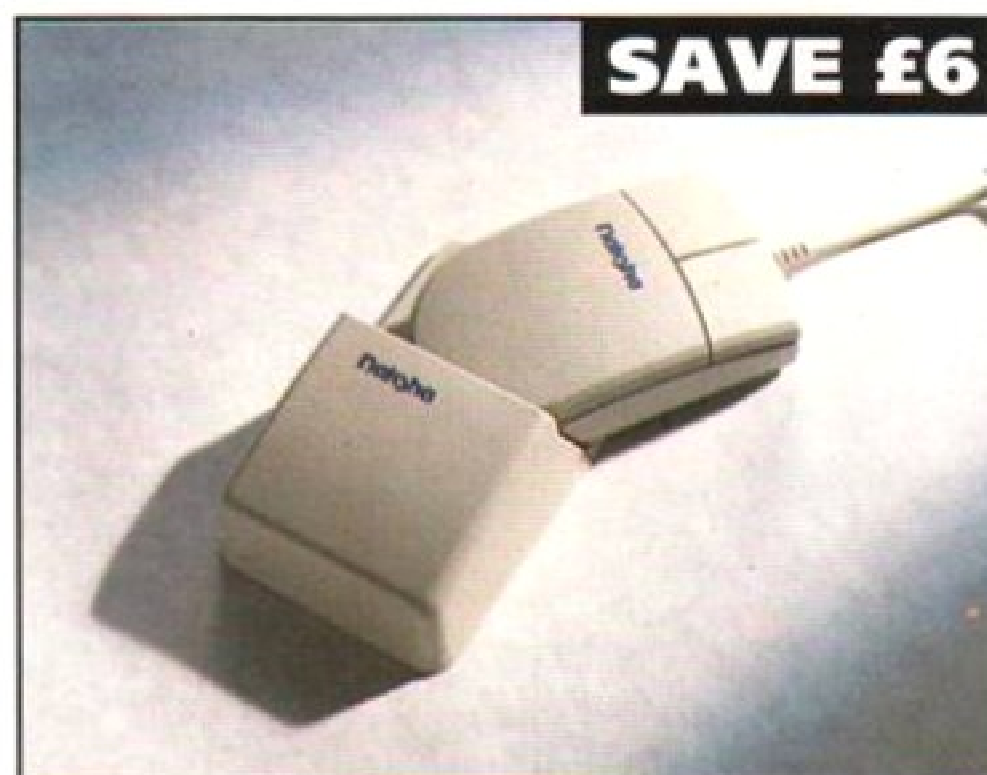
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Loose 'n floppy

If you've not bought an extra floppy drive by now, you'll be tearing your hair out with with those disk-swapping blues. **Pat McDonald** tests all the floppy drives on the market and tells you what's best and why.

MOST NEW AMIGA OWNERS - except for lucky A1500 owners, who get two disk drives when they buy the machine - get very tired of swapping disks. Whether you're saving pictures from *Deluxe Paint*, doing some word processing or just playing a two-disk game, swapping disks is so irritating!

The reason why this happens is easy to understand. When the computer needs to look at a file on a floppy that isn't present in a floppy drive, it stops what it's doing and displays a message asking you to insert the disk it needs. The machine can't very well hunt around for the disk and plonk it in the drive – which means that you, the user, have to find the disk and stick it in.

What can happen is that the Amiga needs some information from a disk, and as soon as it's finished asks for the last one you put in. Imagine what copying disks is like, if you haven't ever tried it – an endless sucession of ejecting disks and inserting them. Mind-numbing in the extreme. But there's nothing you can do unless you get an extra drive.

The problem is not confined to the Amiga – the situation is the same on virtually all disk-based computers. The fact is that most computer manufacturers make most of their machines with at least two drives built in – Commodore don't.

This situation really affects every Amiga user. Whether you're playing multi-disk games, copying disks or trying to program, an extra drive (or even two!) makes life easier and prolongs the life of the internal disk drive.

One important point to bear in mind is that although in theory the Amiga can have up to four floppy drives connected at once, the standard A500 sometimes cannot cope with more than one extra drive. This is due to the fact that some (not all) A500 power supplies are a little puny and external drives rely on the Amiga to provide the juice.

One way to avoid an expensive expansion being rendered useless by lack of power is to take your power supply and expansions to the shop and try out the equipment on one of their computers. If the Amiga's power light goes dim and the drive speeds up and slows down, you'll know you have problems.

Another point to bear in mind is that every floppy drive needs some memory in order to operate: actually, about 25-30K. This may seem trivial, but on a 512K Amiga that's quite a chunk. Even on a 1Mb Amiga, you may find that some programs crash due to lack of memory with external drive(s) connected.

The answer to the problem is to disconnect the drive when you're running memory-hungry programs, particularly graphics and animation stuff. It's such a pain, though, to have to turn off your computer and fiddle around the back to disconnect the lead. Which is why a lot of drives have an on/off switch: to deactivate the drive without unplugging it.

There are plenty of factors to consider when buying an external floppy drive, but the main one, perhaps surprisingly, is not cost. Most drives cost between £50-£60 and you shouldn't penny-pinch to get the best deal. External floppies are probably the most compatible expansion you can get – they all be have exactly alike, with minor gimmicks to distinguish them.

So look at the extra features of all the drives. If you're careless about checking read/write protect tabs (and are prone to catching the odd virus) the PC880B looks attractive. Alternatively, you may prefer to keep a manual check using the track display on the Golden Image 3A-1D. Or you might be a CDTV owner who wants a sleek, black Roclite. What I'm trying to say here is don't buy the most convenient drive. Buy one that you'll be happy working with for the next five years (average time life time of floppy drives). And don't buy one with holes in the case – it will die as soon as you spill some coffee on it.

Finally, before I get down to the nitty-gritty reviews, a few general words of advice. Don't unplug or connect any floppy drives while the computer is turned on. Not only can it damage the internals of the computer, but it's totally pointless. The machine checks how many disk drives are available only when it's turned on.

Whenever you insert a new disk into a drive, check that the metal shutter is working properly. Just put your finger on the top of the disk and move the shutter back and forth a few times. If the shutter is dodgy, it can fall off when you put the disk in the drive, making taking it out again the devil's own job.

When you put a label on a disk, try to take off the old one. You might have to scrape off as much of the old label as possible, because they tend to be sticky little blighters, but it's worth the effort. As labels build up on disks, the disk gets thicker. Usually such a disk will go into a drive, but it's getting it out that can be the problem. Try pressing down on the top edge of the disk as you press the eject button, to squeeze the disk so it can slide out.

A QUICK WORD

About the speed rating in the following reviews: the speed of a floppy-drive reading and writing data is determined by the Amiga, not the drive. So you shouldn't think that the speed is a mark of data flying on to and off a disk. Instead, I've tested the time it takes for a disk's icon to appear on Workbench after insertion, which does vary quantifiably from drive to drive.

DAISY CHAINS

The Amiga has only got one connector for disk drives, right? So how do you connect more than one external disk drive? They can't plug into the same place, can they? No, they don't, is the simple answer.

You plug the first floppy disk drive into the computer, plug the second external into a connector on the back of the first, and the third into the back of the second. Now you can appreciate why it's called 'daisy chaining' – but remember, for the system to work all external drives, except the last in the chain, must have a connector (called a through port).

CBM A1011

£99.99 ■ Commodore
0628 770088

When the first Amiga, the A1000, appeared in 1985, Commodore released an official drive to complement it – the A1010. Featuring a through port (but no on/off switch) it was all right for its day, but it had the styling of an A1000 – square with rounded edges.

A lot of people who bought the A1000 also bought the A1010, and when they upgraded the computer they kept their disk drive. You can still get them second-hand, and so long as you don't mind unplugging it every so often to run certain programs it's good. Commodore soon realised that it just didn't look right with the groovily-styled A500, so they bought out a 'successor', the A1011.



The A1011 is naff. It has no through port, ostensibly because some A500s can only power one external disk drive. Why don't you just fit a porkier power supply, Commodore? Again it has no on/off switch, presumably because Commodore like making people turn off their machines and unplugging the beast.

The Chinon mechanism is noisy and no faster than the internal drive (the slowest drive at recognising that it's got a disk in it). The front cover falls off when the drive is knocked – accidents do happen, so they have to be accounted for. The plastic case appears to have no holes for hot coffee to spill into, but they are there: just hidden beneath some plastic struts. The drive can be used with other externals (I've got it plugged in with two others right now). Remember, it must be the last link in the chain. If you buy two A1011s, only one can be connected at a time.

The A1011 does its job, but there are no frills at all. It doesn't even have a dust flap to prevent extraneous nasties from finding their way into the slot where the disk is inserted. At the price, if you buy one after reading this review you need your head examined. A1012 please, CBM.

CBM A1011

SPEED No faster at recognising disks than the internal.	●●
DOCUMENTATION Good enough – no technical info.	●●●
ACCESSIBILITY The lead is long enough.	●●●
FEATURES It's even worse than its predecessor.	●
VALUE A blatant rip-off if I ever saw one.	●



34%

Zydec

£55 approx ■ Evesham Micros (0386 765500)

A US-based company, Zydec produces stuff that usually has an average-to-good specification with some quality packaging to help shift the product through the shops. This drive is in no way an exception to their normal working practices.

It's got a standard-sized Citizen mechanism (not the same as the newer one by the same company fitted in the Roclite) which happily copes with most situations – it's quiet enough and doesn't click. A through port and on/off switch are fitted as standard.

The metal case is a standard off-the-shelf electronics wholesalers job, with no sort of contouring at all. It's got some cooling vents in it, which are totally unecessary and let in any stray liquid. At least they're masked with a fine mesh, to stop debris getting in and ruining the mechanism.

The documentation is (as far as I can tell) non-existent, but as all you have to do is take it out of the box, flick the switch to on, plug it in and boot the machine, it's not a problem.

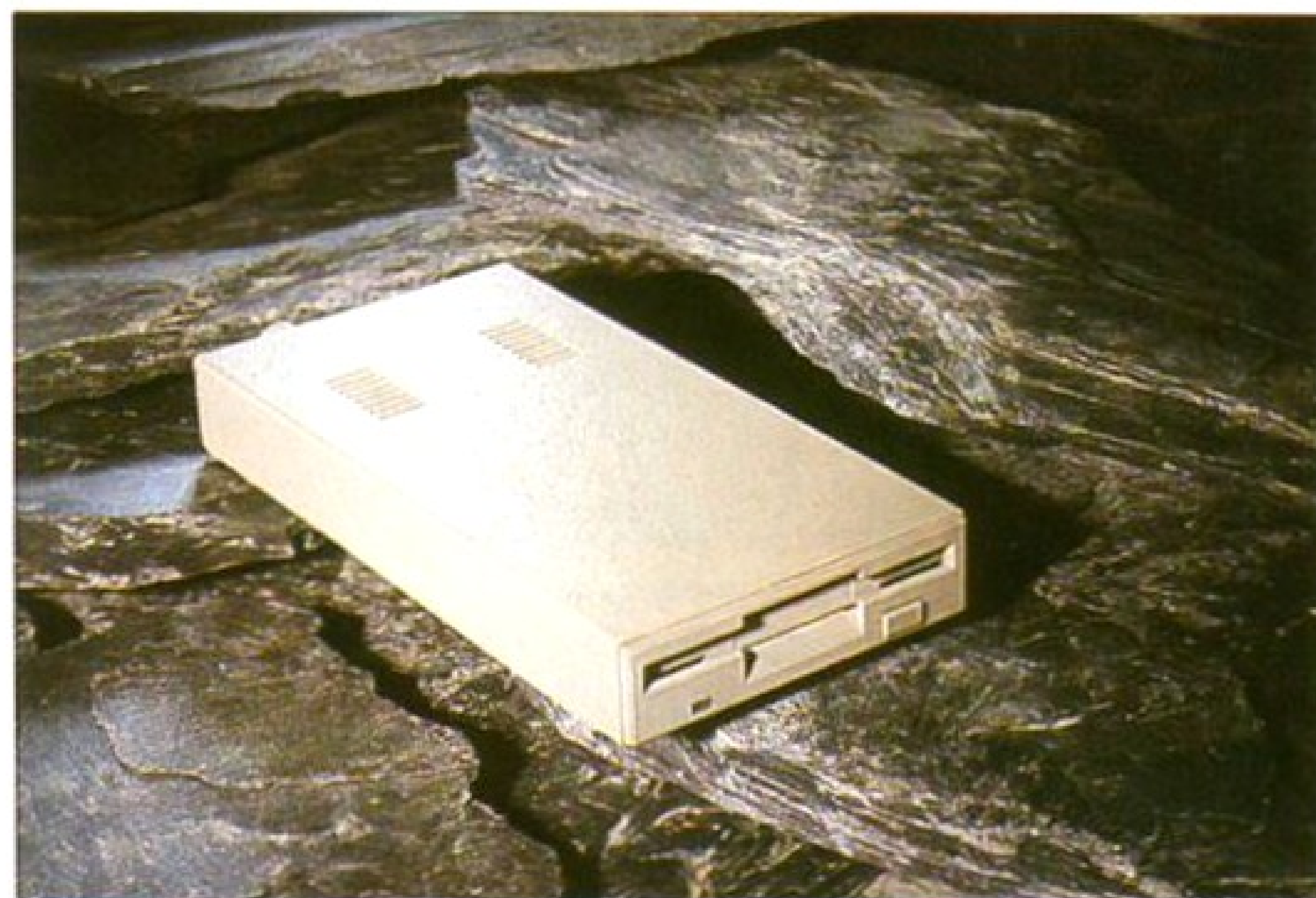
An average drive, with a couple of design faults that a bit of sellotape can fix. I wish I could say more about it, but it's so dull.

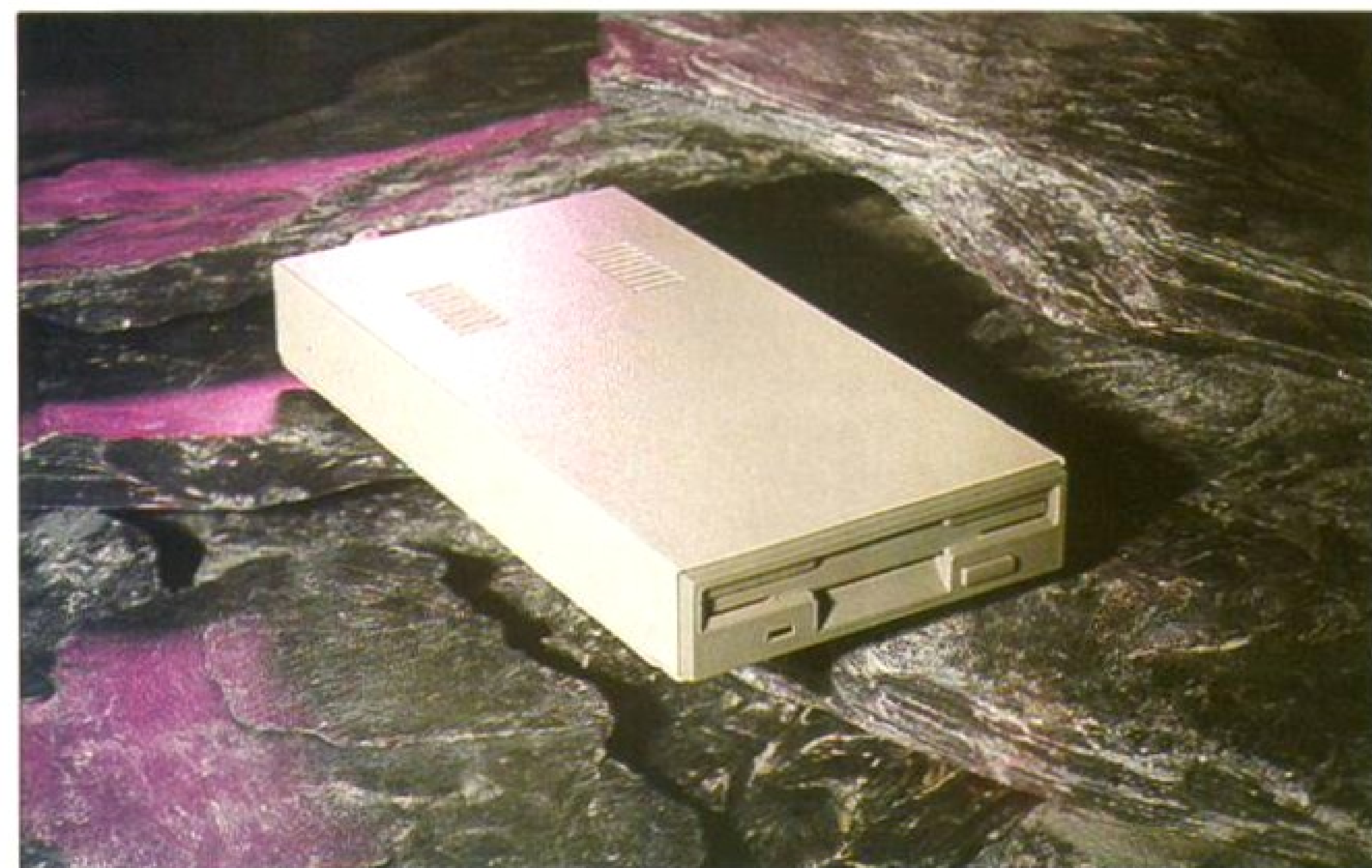
Zydec Floppy Drive

SPEED A little faster than the internal drive.	●●●
DOCUMENTATION Lacking totally, but that's not a problem.	●
ACCESSIBILITY Average case, average lead.	●●●
FEATURES Standard features, no extras at all.	●●●
VALUE Depends where you buy it.	●●●



50%





QTec EX-310

£55 ■ No known UK supplier

Wow. This drive is a copy of the Zydec one, the only outward difference being that it has a little QTec sticker on the front. Who really makes them – Zydec, QTec or a third party?

The probable answer is coincidence. The same wholesalers supply the components and the firms make up their drives. There's only so many ways that you can actually make a floppy unit.

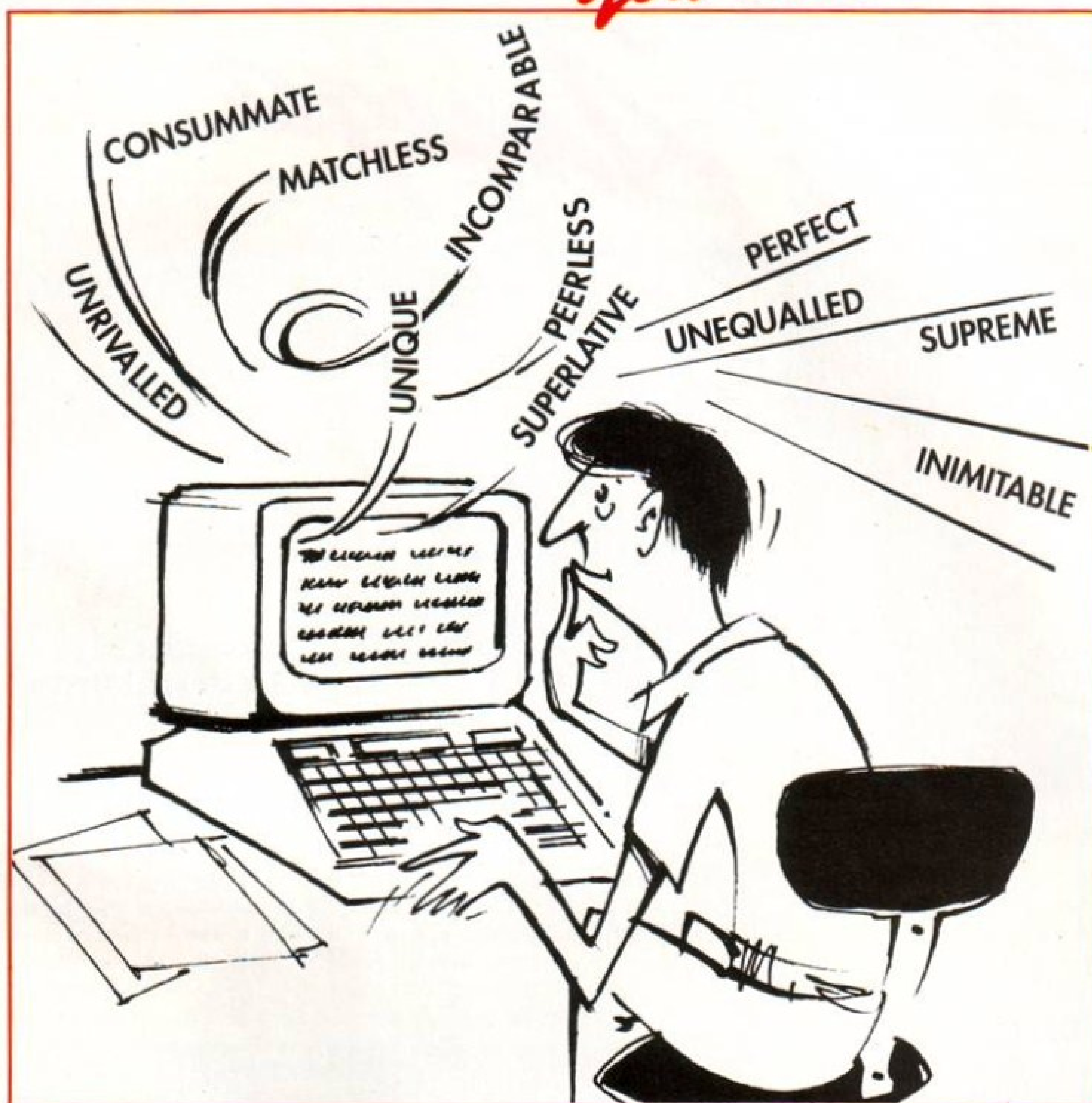
I only mention the drive because it appeared under mysterious circumstances in the *AF* office. We have no idea who sells it, and the price (like all the prices we quote in this review) given above is a guideline of what to expect.

I did say 'outward' appearance. The screws which hold the case together are made of a soft alloy which soon distorted when I attempted to take the drive apart. Short of using a hacksaw – which is a little extreme even for me – I can't be sure what make of mechanism it contains. Probably a Citizen.

If you come across the QTec drive, treat it like the Zydec (reviewed above). It's not the best drive, but it will do all the standard tricks that external floppies perform.

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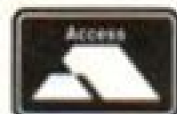
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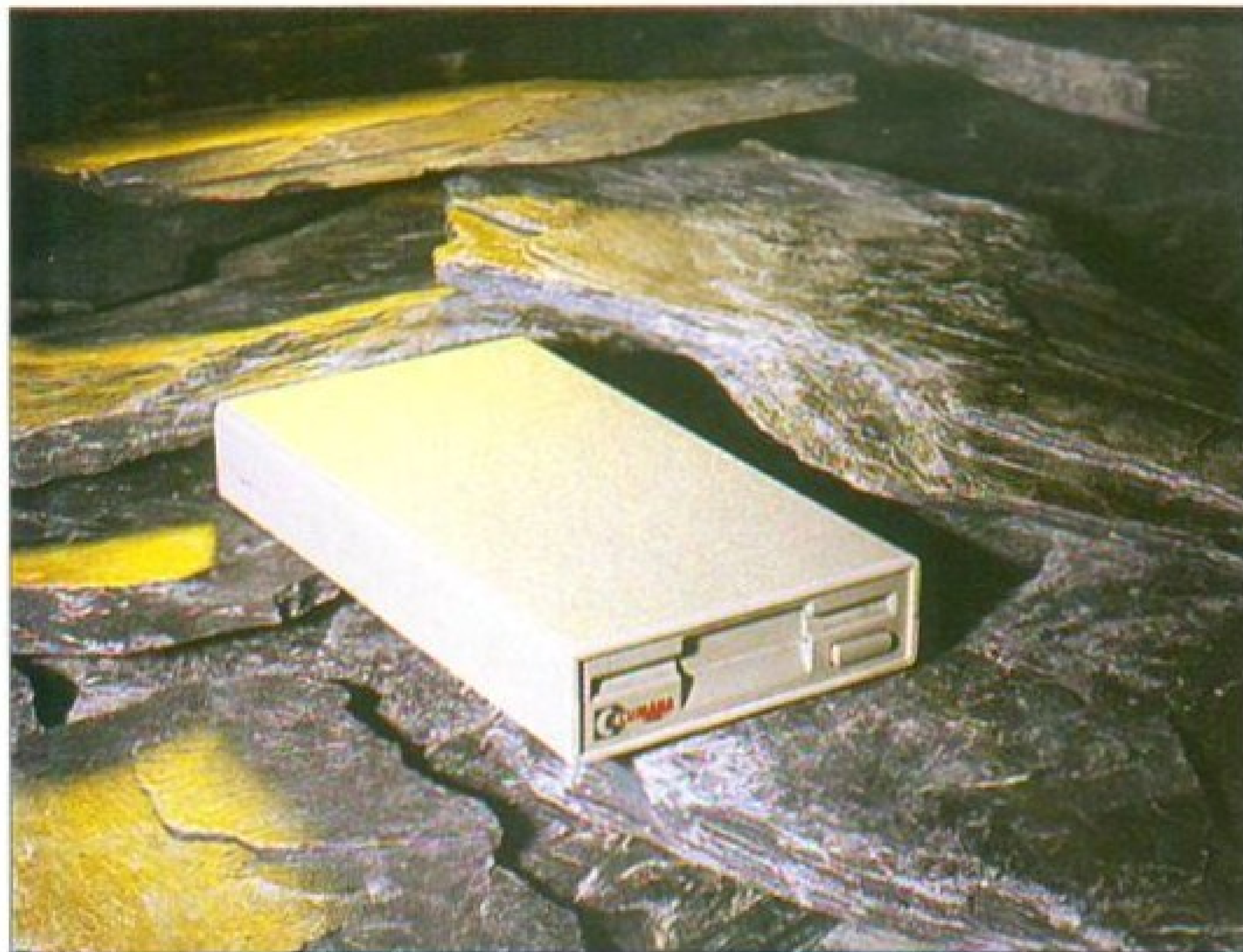
Cumana CAX354

£74.03 ■ Ladbroke Computing (0772 203166)

Cumana have been making external floppy drives since before the Amiga was even invented. It comes as no surprise that this offering is simple, well-designed and a little bit expensive.

You get the two main features that every floppy disk drive needs: a through port and an on/off switch. It's a little boring and normal, but some people like that approach.

For reliability purposes I can definitely say that it's very good – Trent's been using one for over a year and it's never had any problems. The Chinon mechanism has been made very quiet, by simple anti-click circuitry. Speed-wise the CAX354 is nothing special, barely beating the internal drive by a second or two when a disk is inserted. The cable is just long enough to put the drive at the side of an A500, but I found it was easier just sticking it on top of the computer.



One important point to bear in mind is that, although the official Cumana price is displayed above (including VAT), many suppliers sell it for substantially less. Expect to pay around £65 tops.

This drive was put together by somebody who didn't really want people like me to tearing it apart. There are no holes or gaps in the plastic to spill liquid into, and it's snapped together in two parts. Clever without being too complicated.

There are many advertisments at the moment for this drive which claim that it's ultra quiet, and indeed it is. Mind you, you would probably need a microphone and a decibel meter to actually prove the point, as every drive that is reviewed here had the same basic anti-click circuitry, so hte message is simple: don't believe the hype.

The Cumana is a really good, hard-working drive that's maybe just a little too expensive but does its job very well. It's quiet and unassuming.

Cumana CAX 354

SPEED	●●●
About average for an external disk drive.	
DOCUMENTATION	●●
Not a lot, but it's a straightforward drive	
ACCESSIBILITY	●●●●
No holes and an acceptable lead	
FEATURES	●●●
Standard stuff, but it's quiet	
VALUE	●●
Maybe a little bit (£10) expensive.	



57%

Power PC880B

£55■ Power Computing (0234 273000)

Controversial, the PC880B has a number of extra features to make it well worth a look. It's housed in a long, slightly contoured (and unholed) plastic case, and has those standard features of any good external floppy: a through port and on/off switch.

Inside there's a Sony mechanism (nice to see someone using a decent brand) and a fair amount of circuitry. The drive is usually very quiet (more on that later) thanks to an anti-click board, and there's a couple of other widgets which make it very attractive.

The PC880B works in three modes, selected with a switch. In normal mode, it's a well behaved, unobtrusive external drive. Switching it to anti-virus mode automatically write-protects all floppies (including those in other drives). No data can be written on to any floppies, so a virus cannot infect any disks at all. Neat. Bear in mind this feature doesn't stop viruses – it's not a virus hunter/checker, and it doesn't know what a one is. You could have a virus for years and not even know. It's a good feature, but when you turn it off (and you have to if you want to save any data) any viruses will start copying themselves. You'll still need to check for viruses, but the chance of them damaging disks is reduced.



The other feature is the addition of some disk back-up hardware. This, when used with the supplied software, will attempt to copy any disk, and by-passes many forms of copy protection. Note that it cannot cope with all forms of protection, but the device can back up some disks which you normally can't copy.

That's at the centre of the argument. Games software houses, and FAST (Federaton Against Software Theft) want to see devices capable of doing this regulated. After all, legally speaking, you're not allowed to back up anything that isn't your own work.

While the drive is in back-up mode, it can make some horrendous noises. This is because the drive is being synchronized to the same speed as the drive which originally made a disk – some disk duplicating machines go very, very fast. To sum up, the PC880B has a good basic design, with a very effective virus protector and a goodish back-up feature. The price is good, the manual is simple but comprehensive and, apart from the overlong case, I think it's excellent.

Power PC880B

SPEED	●●●
A bit faster than the internal drive.	
DOCUMENTATION	●●●●
Clearly written, nothing complicated.	
ACCESSIBILITY	●●
The case is long, but otherwise fine.	
FEATURES	●●●●●
The most features of any floppy drive.	
VALUE	●●●●●
You get a lot for your money.	



83%

ANTI-VIRUS, CLICKERS, BACKERS UP

A lot of companies sell disk gadgets like anti-virus devices, anti-click boards and back-up cartridges. What's the advantage or disadvantage of incorporating them into a disk drive?

In case you hadn't noticed, the Amiga internal disk drive is notorious for making irritating clicking noises when it's not got a disk in. Nearly all the drives reviewed here have an anti-click device, but this has no effect on the internal drive. Well, there are boards which will do this (and some Public Domain programs) but it's not an impressive trick in my book. The Amiga was designed as a noisy machine – drown out the click with your stereo, that's my motto. Anti-virus and back-up hardware suffers from the same problem. Quite simply, as new viruses and copy protection systems appear, they have to be updated to contend with the new systems. It's an ongoing war between the virus writers and software houses on one side, and the virus hunters and crackers on the other.

The PC880B has some fine features built into it (especially the anti-virus mode – viruses don't work when it's switched on) but in the final analysis I doubt if building it into a drive is the right answer, if there is a right answer.

When the system needs to be updated, you'll have to send the whole drive back to Power. When a separate device needs to be updated, at least you can still keep using your external drive. The Power PC880B is a very good drive today (and I don't want to knock it without reason). Will it be as good a drive tomorrow?

Roclite RF382C

£59.99 ■ £69.99 (CDTV black version)

Silica (081 309 1111)

Roctec are fairly new on the scene, and some of their promised products haven't actually arrived yet. The Roclite drive is definitely on the scene, though, and what a great performer it is.

There's only one gimmick on this drive – the size. The RF382C is tiny, thanks to Roctec using a new slimline Citizen mechanism which is little bigger than four stacked floppies.



This size means that you more space to manoeuvre on your desk, and also means the cable can go a bit further without being stretched. It also looks incredibly chic. But there are other benefits of using this drive.

For one thing, because the mechanism was originally designed to fit in laptop (portable) computers the power drain is pretty small – significantly less than many other drives. Good news for A500 owners.

The real benefit of this drive, though, is in terms of speed. The Roclite can see a disk being inserted in half the time that it takes the internal drive to detect it, and when the disk is ejected the icon disappears practically instantaneously. The Roclite manages a far superior performance in this respect to any of the other drives that were tested.

The metal casing is seamless, and the drive is available in either Amiga ivory or CDTV black – CDTV owners please note that you can use any of the floppy drives listed here with your machine to load Amiga programs, but the Roclite is the only one currently available that's the right colour.

There's not a lot else to say. The RF382C is quiet, fast, has both the all important features (through port and on/off switch) and is very unobtrusive. A little more expensive than other drives, but worth it.

Roclite RF382C

SPEED	●●●●●
The fastest external floppy drive.	
DOCUMENTATION	●
Very little, it's not a problem.	
ACCESSIBILITY	●●●●●
Small size is a big plus factor.	
FEATURES	●●●
No special extras really.	
VALUE	●●●●●
Time is money – spend one, gain the other.	

AMIGA FORMAT Verdict **85%**

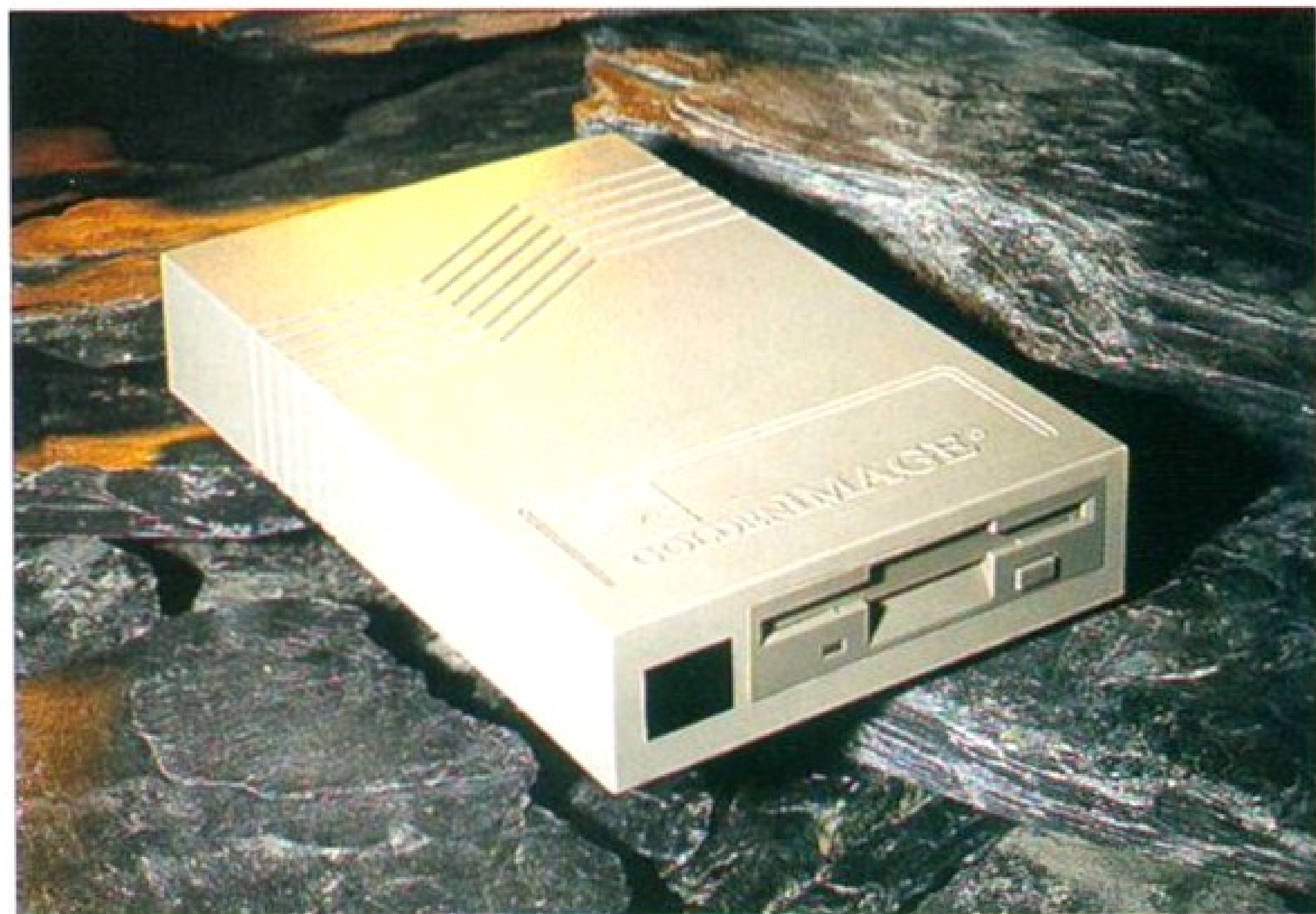
Golden Image 3A-1D

£64.95 ■ Evesham Micros (0386 765500)

There have been a couple of drives like this one for some years, but the 3A-1D is the only one still available. The big selling point of this drive is that it has a bright green LED display, which shows which track is being accessed at any one time.

Housed in a large but smart plastic case, the drive has no holes for accidents to pour themselves into. The case needs to be wider to accomodate the display, but I can't really see why it has to be so long, except perhaps for aesthetic reasons.

In use, the 3A-1D performs very well. When a disk is inserted the device can



detect it fairly quickly, displaying the tracks as they are accessed. When the disk isn't being accessed, the display goes blank. Very sensible, as LEDs do take power.

The Teac mechanism has been silenced by some anti-click circuitry. Apart from the size of the case I found it a very pleasant drive to use. It has a standard through port and on/off switch.

The reason why there's a track display is that, in theory, you can see a virus writing itself to the bootblock of disks. Unfortunately this is a matter of skill and experience – at first it's unclear as to what the numbers actually mean, and your chances of detecting a virus are pretty slim. I'm not saying it's just a gimmick. If nothing else it gives you something to look at when programs are loading - some games with odd loaders make it go berserk! Eventually you can diagnose a virus infecting the system, but it's not as good as a proper virus hunter/killer program.

Included is a large instruction manual. This doesn't have lots of technical information, just translations of the same basic instructions. No doubt this helps to sell the drive in countries other than the UK or USA.

There was a time when this sort of drive was very fashionable - people were convinced that it made viruses impotent. All it really did was let you see them in action.

It's an interesting drive, but I can't really see many people being that awed or inspired by it. There are better designs available – but then you could buy worse.

Golden Image 3A-1D

SPEED	●●●●
Prety nippy, not as fast as the Roclite.	
DOCUMENTATION	●●●●
Looks daunting but is good.	
ACCESSIBILITY	●●●●
It's big, but so is the lead (750mm).	
FEATURES	●●●●
A bit more than your average external floppy.	
VALUE	●●●
Track display isn't that special an extra.	

AMIGA FORMAT Verdict **72%**

FUTURE OF FLOPPIES

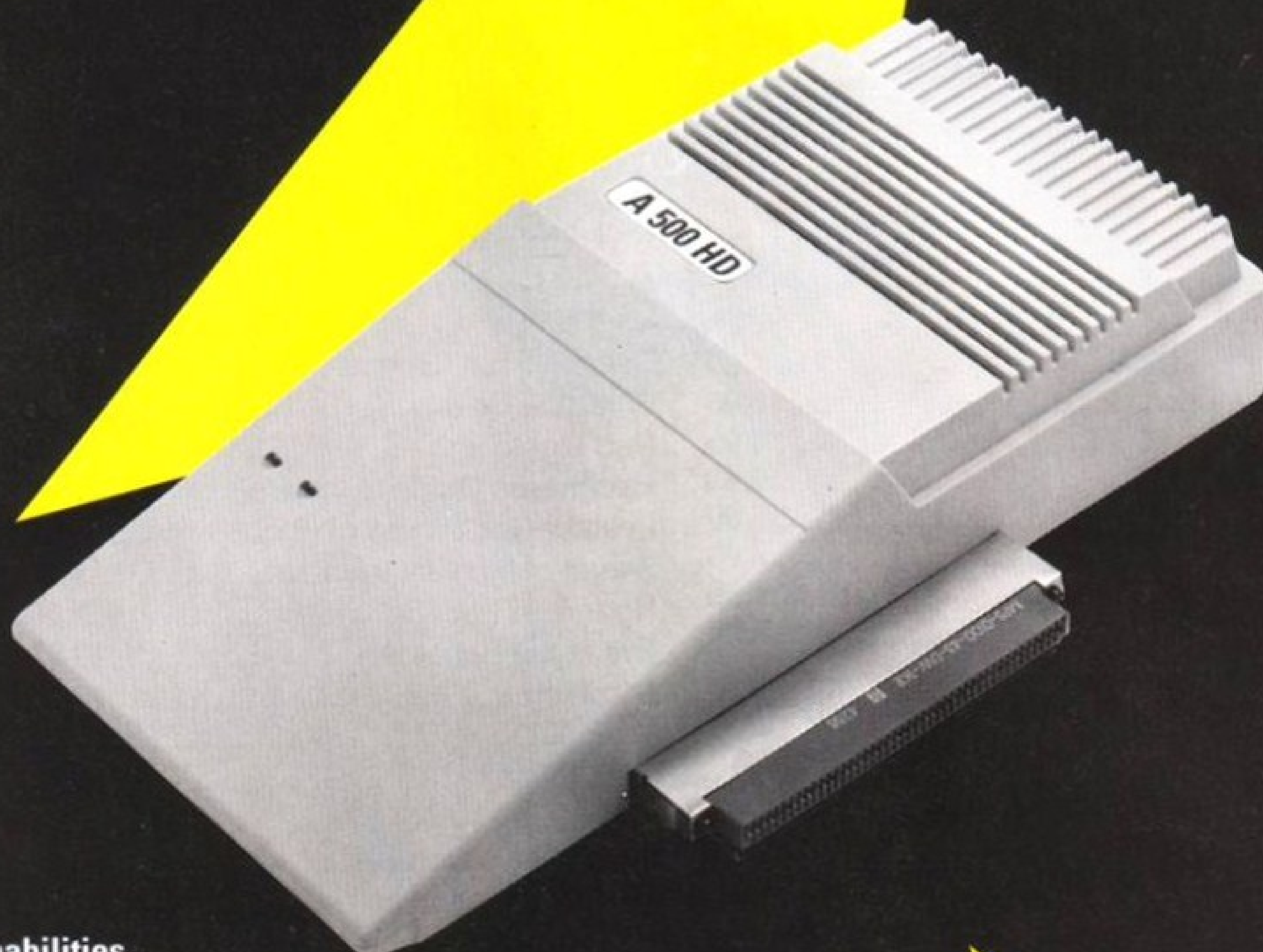
There is a lot of development work going on at the moment with floppy drives , but very little is yet available commercially in the UK. For instance, companies that do make floppy drives which can store over twice the information of a normal drive – so called 2Mb drives, sometimes called high-density or quad-density drives.

There is also the possibility of connecting drives which use a different technology. Floppy drives are available now that can store about 18Mb of data on. They're called magneto-optical drives, and work by using a laser beam to encode magnetic fields on the disks, rather than a standard drive head. Although they have massive storage, they are rather slow, and the disks can only be used with the special drives.

When will we see more advanced drive technology made available on the Amiga scene? The Roclite is just one example of a whole new generation of floppy disk types. Watch this space.

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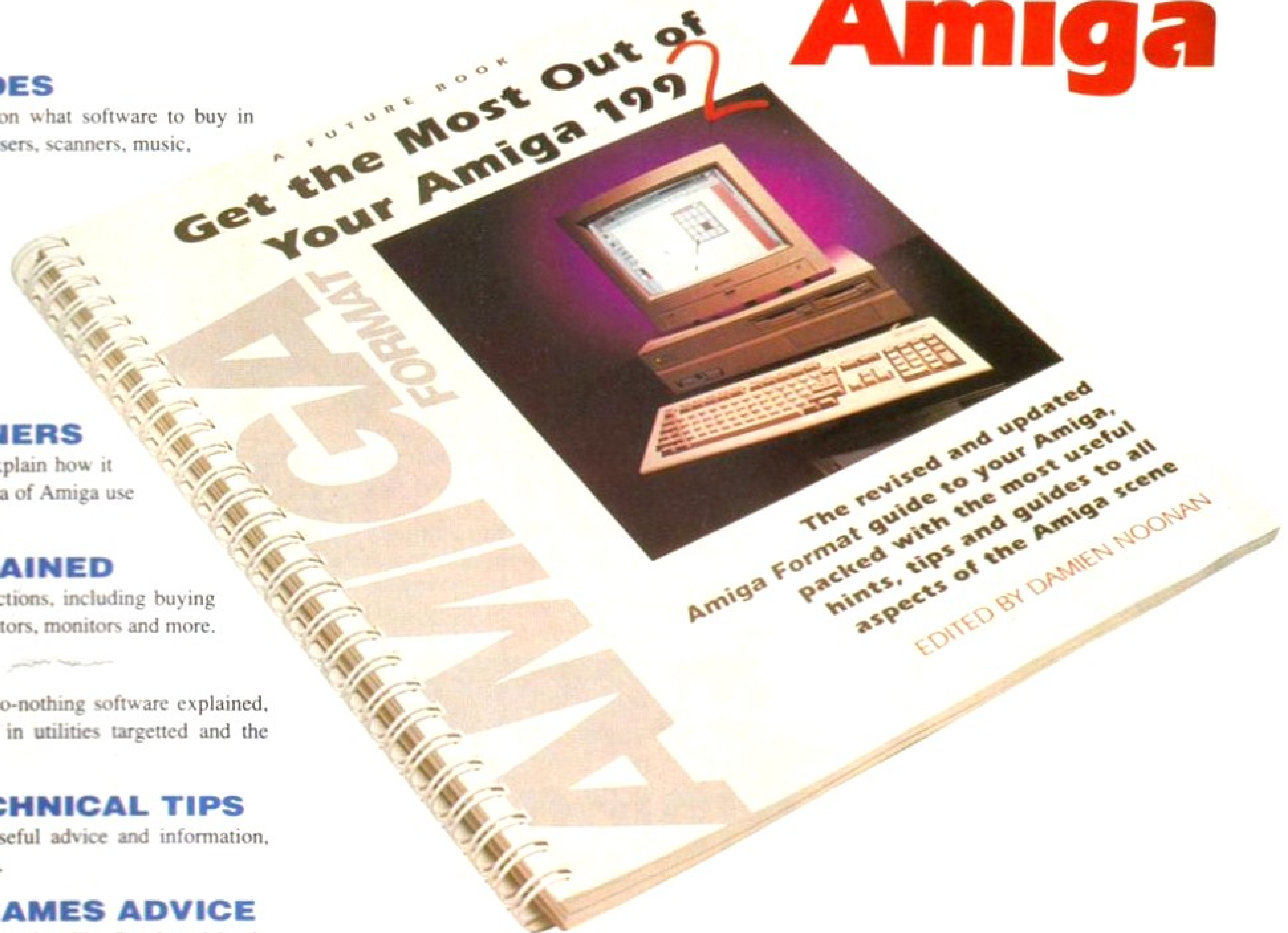
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Workbench

Another incredible amount of up-to-date Amiga information and expert advice, that is ready to be read and vetted by our man in the know, **Pat McDonald**. Let's start with...

ANCIENT INCOMPATIBILITY

I'm having trouble loading the game *P47* from MicroProse. The disk just refuses to load. I've tried loading it on my A500 as well as on three friend's machines. It has alos been replaced four times, twice by the manufacturers.

I have noted the instructions which say that I need to insert the Kickstart disk first, and then the game disk. I thought the latest Amigas had Kickstart on a ROM chip inside the machine – if not, why not? How do I create a Kickstart disk?

I would be interested in your comments.

R LUKEHURST

What is probably wrong is *P47* (a rather old game) was written for a 1.1 or 1.2 version of the original Amiga, the A1000. This did not have Kickstart on ROM, and needed a Kickstart disk to be inserted before you could load a game or Workbench.

When 1.3 came along, a lot of programs stopped working. I can only assume that you are using a 1.3 Amiga, and the program is therefore not compatible with any present day A500s. Get a refund.

NEW WORKBENCH

I wonder if you can help me. I have bought a second-hand Amiga, only to find the Workbench disk is defective. All the other programs that I got with it work OK, but I realise that without Workbench my Amiga is little more than a games machine. Where can I get a replacement?

N P EPPS, CROYDEN

You can get a replacement from any shop that sells Amigas. They may need to order it for you if you want a genuine Commodore replacement, but most shops are sympathetic about this sort of request and will only charge you for a blank disk if you explain your situation. Just show them the knackered disk if they get shirty – they'll probably appreciate your predicament, and make a back-up copy straight away.

PRINTER PROBLEMS

I have a 1Mb A500, and I am experiencing some problems when using a printer that I have just acquired. The printer is working fine when using *Protext 5*, but will not work with *Deluxe Paint II*. The printer is a Citizen 120D, and I have tried all the configurations given in the book.

IAN HENDRY, GLASGOW

Aha. *Deluxe Paint II* was written using Kickstart 1.2. The main differences between 1.3 and 1.2 is the way that printers are handled – 1.3 is much better from this respect. *Protext 5* works on 1.3 and 2.0.

One way to handle the problem would be to install Workbench 1.3 onto a disk, and then copy *Deluxe Paint 2* onto it. A much simpler, if slower, solution is to load Workbench 1.3, take out the Workbench disk and put the *Deluxe Paint II* disk in, then click on the *Deluxe Paint II* icon to run the program. You need to swap disks a few times, and you will probably need to change the printer type on your Workbench disk if you haven't already.

HOW DO I...

In *AF*28, on Page 219 there's a picture of your Workbench. Could you advise me as to the procedure to get the same items in the top of the screen, that is time, chip memory, fast memory and date.

JIM BANKS, CROYDON

LOOKING UP

At present I own a 1MB A500, but I plan to try and expand it, so if you could possibly answer the following questions it would help me with all of my buying decisions:

1) How do you connect high-density disk drives to the Amiga (1.2Mb and 1.44Mb types)? I hear it's not just a case of wiring two plugs. You can buy them quite cheaply (£60) if you know where to look, and I'm on a tight budget.

2) On your standard 3.5-inch disks can you cut a hole in the top left corner and use them as high-density disks?

3) On 0.5Mb RAM expansions for the A500 (like the old A501) can you take out the 16 RAM chips and replace them with larger capacity chips, to give more memory?

4) On the PD Atari ST emulator can you run the Atari 8-bit emulator to run games for the old 400, 800 and XL computers?

5) If you have a long sound sample – say 400K – on a package like Audiomaster II in memory, is it possible to use the Action Replay II to turn it into a SoundTracker module?

6) Is there any program that is able to convert IBM and ST pictures into IFF format? If so how much does it cost?

7) Will Electronic Arts make *Deluxe Paint V* compatible with 24-bit colour? I sincerely hope so!

8) To solve an argument, can you print a circuit diagram enabling an A2000 add-on to work with an Amiga 500?

9) How do you make an IBM emulator like the KCS Bitcon board?

10) Is it possible to make a RAM expansion (like the SupraRAM) take 1Mb chips – that's one megabit chips?

JOHN ADAIR, SCUNTHORPE



The Applied Engineering floppy drive can be configured to work with the Amiga, but is still not available in the UK.

1) If you plug in a high-density drive into an Amiga, it will treat it as a standard density drive (maximum storage space 880K). To be able to use the drive to its maximum, you will have to write a small mountlist entry and use the MOUNT command, either in your Workbench startup-sequence or direct from the Shell or Command Line Interface.

Although high-density drives for the Amiga are available both in the USA and Germany I know of no UK supplier. I expect as more people want them (to store more on floppies) then shops will start selling them, together with a disk counting the mountlist entry.

2) Yes, although sometimes you split the disk trying to do it, and some standard 3.5-inch disks are not of sufficient quality to be used with high-density drives. The only way to find out is to test them.

3) No.

4) I doubt it. A games machine emulator has to interpret the changes on the emulated machines video display, and two stage emulation is going to be incredibly slow – much too slow for video games.

5) No, I'm afraid you'll have to slice up the sample and arrange it yourself as best you can using a sample sequencer like *OctoMED* on this issue. A graphic equalizer and some filters help enormously, to sort out the instrument you want to isolate.

6) Try and start phoning some Public Domain libraries – they do exist but tracking them down is not going to be an easy job. Assuming that you need three different disks to cope with all the different PC and ST data types, that will cost you between about £2.67 and £10.50, depending of course on who you buy them from.

7) I doubt it. To use 24-bit pictures, you need a very porky Amiga (a single 24-bit screen occupies hundreds of K of memory). A 24-bit version of *Deluxe Paint* would also need to be compatible with the whole range of 24-bit cards – currently there is no standard for such video cards. It would be a lot of effort for Electronics Arts to go to, for the handful of Amiga owners with 24-bit cards.

8) No. Hope that solves your argument.

9) It helps to have some good college qualifications in electronics, an electronics laboratory, a good working knowledge of the different PC hardware combinations, an even better working knowledge of Amiga internals and about five years of spare time working on your own. Buy a ready made one, it's easier.

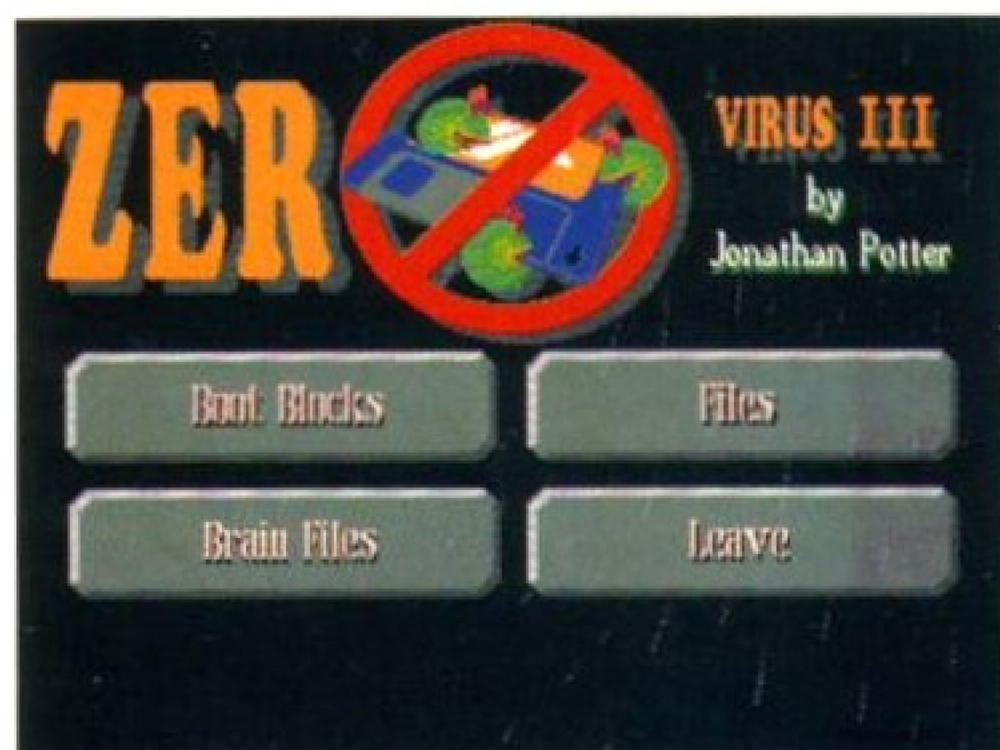
10) Er, the SupraRAM 500RX does take 1Mb chips anyway, or 256K chips too! Whichever type you use determines how much memory the expansion can provide – 256K chips give between 512K and 2MB of extra memory, while 1Mb chips give from between 2MB and the full 8MB.

The easiest way for you to accomplish this is to use a program which does it anyway! The program running on my Workbench is *ZeroVirus 3*, this an automatic virus checker. Many other Public Domain programs have a similar display.

So, try and hunt down a copy of *ZeroVirus 3* from any of your local PD libraries, and read how to use it. On my Amiga I run *ZeroVirus* automatically when starting Workbench, by having these lines added to my startup-sequence:

```
CD Sys:AntiVirus
ZeroVirus -i
CD Sys:
```

Further instructions on getting *ZeroVirus 3* to run automatically can be found in the documentation that accompanies the program. There is a slight problem though, because *ZeroVirus* is rather large and won't fit on a standard Workbench disk without deleting some other files first.



ZeroVirus 3 is an incredibly easy virus checker to use, and you can configure it to be up-and-running as you are using the Workbench.

BASIC PLEASE

I have owned my A500 for nearly two years now and although I have dabbled a bit in the graphics department I have mainly just spent my time playing games. I am now interested in starting to use my Amiga for more than just zapping aliens, and I want to learn how to be able to program on it. I am currently looking at AMOS – could you answer a few of my questions...

1) Is it a good language for beginners? I would probably start off with demos and simple games.

2) I have 1Mb of memory and I am planning on getting a second drive. Is this enough machine to do what I want to do?

3) Does AMOS come with a good manual, and are there any books which would help?

4) Are you planning a series of articles at all aimed at beginners about programming using a language such as AMOS?

MATTHEW WOODROOF, BRENTWOOD

1) Sort of. AMOS Basic assumes that you already know how to program in Basic – if you do then it's fairly clear on what you have to do.

2) Yes, but don't forget to buy that external drive – it makes the Amiga so much more usable.

3) The manual for AMOS is quite good, although there have been a lot of updates and errata printed which can confuse things. Sometimes the manual says an example program is in such and such a place, when it fact it's been moved somewhere else.

4) No, but if enough people ask Damien (the editor) he might pencil it in.

ANGRY AND ANNOYED

Regarding your reply in Answer File from *AF*28, to somebody who "couldn't understand a bloody thing in the MusicX 1.1 manual". You suggested they contact Monumental Music for their tutorial tape at £9.99, but you couldn't contact them as their phone had been cut off.

Well, they cashed my cheque way back in February this year, and I still haven't received my tutorial tape. Not only is their phone disconnected, they can't be contacted by mail either. Please don't suggest that readers contact rip-off merchants!

EH TATTON, MANCHESTER

Why did you wait till now to write in and tell me your sorry tale? The requests for help with *MusicX* have been mounting, and that was the only (albeit out of date) source of help that I knew of. Does anyone know of (or want to start) a *MusicX* user group?

FLIGHT CONTROL

1) As more Amiga flight sims come out with an analogue joystick control option, when are third-party manufacturers going to give us as wide a choice as PC owners already enjoy?

2) Is there some way I can use PC analogue joysticks with my sims, *ProFlight*, *F19* and so on?

3) Is the Gravis mousestick as good for flight sims as the adverts claim? If so, is it also a good replacement for the mouse?

4) In *AF*28 the Alfa Data TKB-MT-A trackball was given a good verdict. Do you know of any even better trackballs, or is this as good as they get?

5) Is an Amiga version of *The Sentinel* available. I had it on my old C64 and would like to get it again?

PAUL HUGHES, SLOUGH

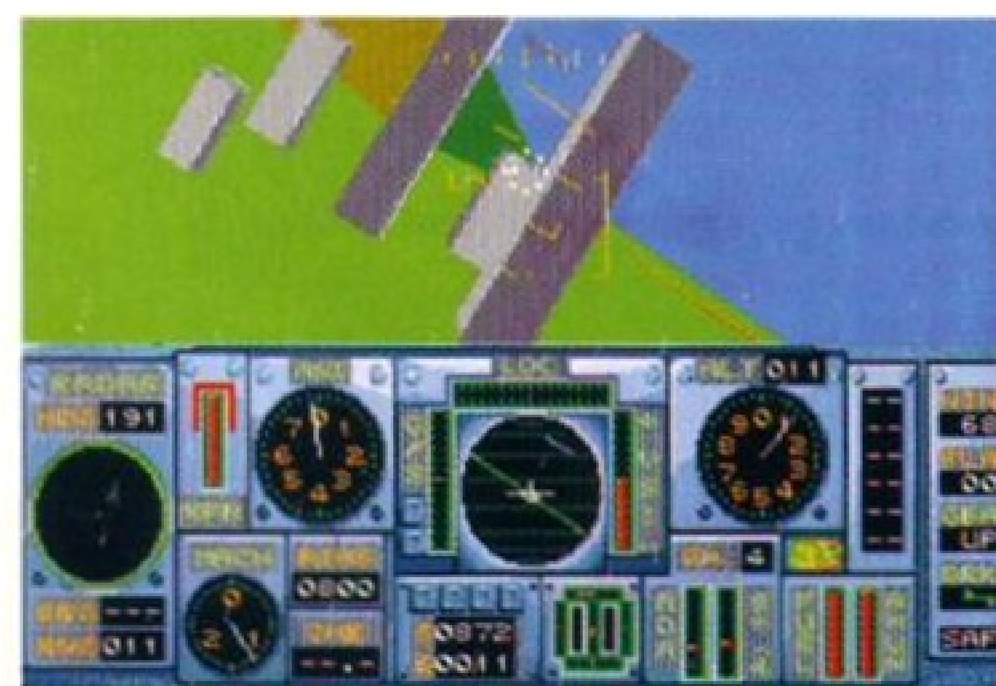
1) At a guess, July 31st 1994.

2) I know of no solution, although it probably isn't that difficult to manufacture an interface to use PC joysticks on the Amiga.

3) The Gravis mousestick is excellent. The reason we haven't reviewed it up to now is because it's so old. If you don't mind setting it up every time you reset the Amiga (a procedure that's tricky at first but soon becomes second nature) then I recommend it. It's not as good as a mouse, simply because it tries to autocentre – you have to fight it slightly to reach the edges of the screen with a mouse pointer.

4) If there was, don't you think we'd have told you?

5) Your best bet (as with all the old games that people reminisce about) is to search through the mail-order companies budget buys. Many excellent games from yesteryear can be obtained in this way.



ProFlight is just one of the current crop of flight simulations that work with an analogue joystick, for realistic rolls and dives.

TOO MUCH CHIP RAM?

I have a plain A1500. The *AF*28 Coverdisk runs fine, but the *First Samurai* demo crashes after the title screen and I can only get it running by using the Alt + D keys, to make my computer behave like a bare 512K machine.

Your advice would be most welcome as to whether the problem lies with me or my machine!

A W WHITELOCK, SUFFOLK

It's not you or your machine – it's the demo. Many programmers have great difficulty getting their heads around the concept of memory configuration. The basic A1500 has 1MB of chip RAM (memory), which is accessible to the custom chips and to the 68000 processor.

Most programmers assume that, if a machine has more than 512K of memory, then some of the memory will be fast memory (RAM). Only the processor can access this memory, and as the custom chips cannot steal time from the processor when it's running programs from this area of memory, it's faster. The ideal place to store programs.

What's probably happening is that your computer is thinking: "Oh great! He's got more than 512K, so some of it must be fast RAM! I'll just load here... Oh dear, this part of fast RAM doesn't really exist – I've just loaded a program into limbo. Guru time!".

Until programmers get the idea that they must not jump to false conclusions about the internal memory of an Amiga, the best thing to do is to get some fast RAM (additional memory) for your computer.



Unfortunately, the *First Samurai* demo from AF28 doesn't seem to like 1Mb of chip RAM only. Reboot with Alt D.

MODULAR SAVE

£50

Anybody who has bought the Action Replay II cartridge from Datel will probably have problems trying to load a saved music module into a sample sequencer like *ProTracker*. The way to get around this is to put MOD. in front of the name, for example MOD.Song1. You can do this when you are actually saving the module from within the Action Replay II.

DAVID SHARPE, MONAGHAN

Thanks for the tip, have a £50 software voucher!

DOESN'T FIT

I recently upgraded from an A500 to an A1500. Unfortunately for me I found that Rombo's Vidi Amiga could no longer be used because the modulator is now next to the parallel port. I went out and bought a data switch box with a long cable, but the only thing I could digitise with the Vidi was

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a screen full of wavy black lines. Thinking there must be something wrong with the data switcher box I took it back and I got it replaced but Vidi still didn't work. Eventually I just took the modulator out and sent the mono output to my video recorder connected to a TV, and plugged the Vidi straight in. It worked fine.

Either there's something wrong with my computer or the switchbox. I would be grateful for your opinions as to which it is. I'm getting a bit fed up of a black-and-white display.

S BATES, NOTTS

Avoid data switchboxes! They don't appear to work at all on the Amiga, though no doubt an Amiga-only data switch box will appear in the future. What you need is an extension cable. If you want the parallel connector extended, you will need to ask for 25-pin D-type cable with a female connector at one end, a male on the other and all the pins connected (pin one to pin one, two to two and so on). Where do you get one? Start at the place where you bought the data switchbox.

Alternatively, you can buy a 23-pin extension cable for the modulator. Buy a floppy disk drive extension cable (they have 23-pins as well) from We Serve (0705 325354) for £11.89 including postage.

KEYBOARD GIBBER

My problem is trying to autoboot an accounts program that I have written with that much maligned language AmigaBASIC. Leafing through my back issues I found a solution in AF24 which I followed to the letter, and lo and behold it worked. However, it made the number keys behave strangely.

All the non-numbered keys on the keypad are dead, apart from the '–' key. The shifted 2 and the @ symbol were swapped. As soon as I use the program via Workbench everything works properly. Is there something wrong with my machine? Is it normal? Is there a cure?

STEPHEN DU VERGIER, GRAYS

The reason why is that the Amiga has not been told about the UK keyboard layout – it defaults to the USA system. What you need to do is boot-up Workbench, double click on the Shell or CLI icon, and then replace Mydisk: with the name of your disk. Don't forget the colon at the end:

```
Makedir Mydisk:DEVS/KEYMAPS
Copy FROM SYS:DEVS/System-Configuration
TO Mydisk:DEVS
Copy FROM SYS:DEVS/KEYMAPS/KEYMAP.GB TO
Mydisk:DEVS/KEYMAPS
```

If the first line reports an error, then you haven't got a DEVS directory on Mydisk:. To make one, type:-

```
Makedir Mydisk:DEVS
```

Then repeat the above procedure. This copies the system-configuration file (where the Preferences choices are stored) and the relevant keymap onto Mydisk:. Then you should be able to boot-up your disk and it will work fine.

BOOT SWITCH

I recently bought an external drive for my A500, because the internal drive was becoming unreliable and making some very strange noises.

The problem is when starting the Amiga off, it will not read any disk placed in the external drive. Is there a switch or maybe a piece of software that will transfer all disk activity to the external drive?

I am eager to off load most of the work to the external drive before the internal packs up completely. Does this also mean that if the internal drive fails, there is no alternative but to replace it, or invest in a hard drive of course?

DANIEL COUSINS, WICKFORD

Boot switchers are widely available – for instance one from Ace Repairs (0503 20282) costs £20. These are hardware devices that do indeed let you boot from an external disk drive, rather than the internal one.

Even if you do buy a hard disk, it would still be a very good idea to get your present one either fixed or replaced. There's not much difference because the cost of most Amiga repairs are about the same as a new internal drive (£50-£70).

CRUNCHED MUSIC

This is a remedy for all those budding musicians that can't get the *NoiseTracker Module Player* from *AF*28's Coverdisk to work properly.

First you must get your hands on a crunching program. I personally use *PowerPacker*. Once the program is running, load in your module as a data file, crunch it and save it out under a different name (say MOD.Song1 becomes MOD.Song1.pp) to the same directory.

What the author of *NoisePlayer* had neglected to mention in his documentation was that his program will only play crunched modules.

NL CLEAVES, PLYMPTON

PowerPacker 2.3b is the Public Domain version of the program, and is widely available through most PD libraries. The latest *3.0A PowerPacker Professional* (soon to be succeeded by *3.0B*) is licenceware, which means it costs £10 or so from Softville (0705 266509). Sorry for the confusion.



***PowerPacker Professional* is one of the best cruncher programs you can get, to make programs and data files take up less space on a disk.**

NEW OWNERS

1) I am planning to buy an A500 for Christmas. I already own a Ferguson MC03 monitor/Television. It has three input connectors; a SCART; an RGB; and a DIN socket. Could you tell me which is the best one to use? I know I can easily get hold of a SCART cable.

2) Is the arrival of Workbench 2 and the ECS likely to result in a significant price rise for the A500? If so do you know much it is going to be? I know I can get an A500 from Special Reserve for about £300, and then get a 512K RAM expansion from Power Computing for £24. I understand, though, that Commodore may decide to alter the PCB so that to include the extra memory, and then mail-order firms wouldn't be able to sell an up-to-date A500 without the expansion memory.

JOHN GILMARTIN, DERBY

1) The SCART would of course be the easiest solution, because this has the sound and video signals already linked into one connector. The RGB might (or might not) provide a better signal, while the DIN socket is either RGB digital (a somewhat naff system) or for sound input.

2) The A500s price point of £399 RRP is likely to stay here for a while. If you mean the discounts and offers available from shops for a 512K Amiga at £300 will disappear, the answer is yes, but I doubt if supplies will have dried up by Christmas. Such an Amiga will not have either Workbench 2 or the full ECS (it might have a fatter Agnus – half of the ECS) so they don't count as "up to date" Amigas.

CONFUSED AUSSIE

In *AF*25's Answerfile there was a section on adding memory to your A500. You stated that if you insert an expansion card of more than 512K into the underside expansion port, then it will not autoconfigure (recognised automatically by the computer) and will invalidate the warranty because the machine has to be dismantled to fit them.

DISMANTLED? Don't you just lift the hatch and bung the expansion in? On Cortex boards with up to 8Mb of memory, you just put it in and it even auto configures. Top this off with the fact that it doesn't invalidate your warranty and you're on to a winner. How do you create a readme documentation file on a disk? Sorry about the letter being a bit out of date, but we get the magazine rather later than the rest of you here down under.



The cortex wouldn't even fit into the trap-door slot, without using a sledgehammer that is.

BEN PETERSON, AUSTRALIA

Who said the Cortex fitted on the underside of an A500? I certainly didn't – you fit it on the left-hand side expansion bus, not on the underneath of the trap-door slot. In fact, all the best, autoconfiguring, large memory expansions (like the Cortex and SupraRAM 500RX) go there. As do hard disks with their own built-in memory expansion.

Some cheaper expansions don't though. They fit into the trap-door slot, and need a connection to the Gary chip to work properly with large amounts of memory. To get at the Gary chip you need to unscrew the machine, invalidating your warranty. Check the adverts for the memory expansion before you buy. As for creating a readme document file, any old word processor or text editor program will do that for you.

Answerfile

Here's a special edition of an ever-popular slot that answers your more general Amiga questions. **Pat McDonald** highlights some of the differences and implications of the arrival of the A500 Plus.

Q How compatible is Workbench 2 with Workbench 1.3?

A So far as I can tell, extremely. Programs which use AmigaDOS properly (that is you boot the disk and then click on an icon) have the highest level of compatibility. The exception to this is Public Domain software, which due to using customised loaders and home-brew programming often doesn't work.

Most commercial software does work and if you find it doesn't, the software house (if it's still in business will usually offer an upgrade which is compatible with the new system. It's the bread and butter of the serious software industry, so they have to support it.

Q What benefits (if any) does Workbench 2 offer over 1.3?

A Too many to list here. You can use a 16-colour high resolution screen on Workbench, making disks autoboot is a lot easier, the fast filing system means that Amiga floppy drives are much faster (hooray!) and there's now a standard look and feel to the whole system.

Of course, you can still customise it to behave as bizarre as you like. There is the possibility (I am unable to confirm this as yet) that the 8375 HR Agnus chip will give an A500 Plus up to 2Mb of chip RAM. Add 8Mb (or more with an accelerator) and the possibilities for all Amiga programs are vastly increased.

Q Why is software incompatible between the A500 and A500 Plus?

A Quite simply, because the programmers have not had the chance to test their programs on the A500 Plus. When a programmer sees a bug, they simplysit down and fix it.

As the Plus becomes more widespread and more A500s are upgraded to Workbench 2 and ECS standard, more new programs will be compatible. From around 90 per cent of new software now, the proportion will increase to near 100 per cent over the next few months. At the same time, existing serious software will be upgraded to work with the new machine.

The big downer is the situation with games. Games are just never upgraded – they're released in their final version and then never touched again by the programmer. But, when new versions of the same game appear in the future, they should be programmed so that they work with the new system.

Q Recently my A500 stopped working and I took it back to the shop. They replaced it with an A500 Plus, and now a lot of my software collection doesn't work. What are my options?

A Well, if you must use all your old software, take it back to the shop and ask for a standard A500. They'll probably try to fob you off with excuses ("They simply are not available sir.") but at the end of the day, you bought an A500 off them and that's what they should replace it with. It's their problem, so let them deal with it. Imagine taking a car back to the garage, and being given back a van.

You should consider hanging onto the A500 Plus, though. In a couple of years' time, Workbench 1.3 will be virtually extinct and all the new games will work with the Plus (or a lot of software houses will be as dead as Workbench 1.3). In the short time, though, the Plus will lose out, but think in the long term and you've just got a free upgrade.

Q Can I upgrade my A500 to an A500 Plus?

A Oh yes. Commodore are preparing an upgrade kit for Workbench 2 (it should be available at the show). It remains to be seen whether they will include the new Agnus 8375 and Denise 8373, but if CBM don't then lots of third parties will. If there really are over half-a-million A500s in the UK alone, that's an awful lot of upgrade kits to sell.

Q I'm furious with Commodore about releasing the Plus. As a machine code programmer, I now have to learn about a new machine, none of my old programs work, and my life is now hell.

A I sympathise. Machine-code programming is one of the most difficult computer activities to do well. A lot of programmers out there are going to have to modify the way they think about the machine. A lot of trial and error will be necessary to work out how the new ECS and new Agnus behave. Good luck.

Your best bet is to get in touch with as many programmers you know, and solve the problem en masse rather than individually – in other words, get organised. The people who will probably learn the fastest are the Public Domain coding teams, as they have the best communication systems via Bulletin Boards. Gradually it will filter down when the new programming books start appearing.

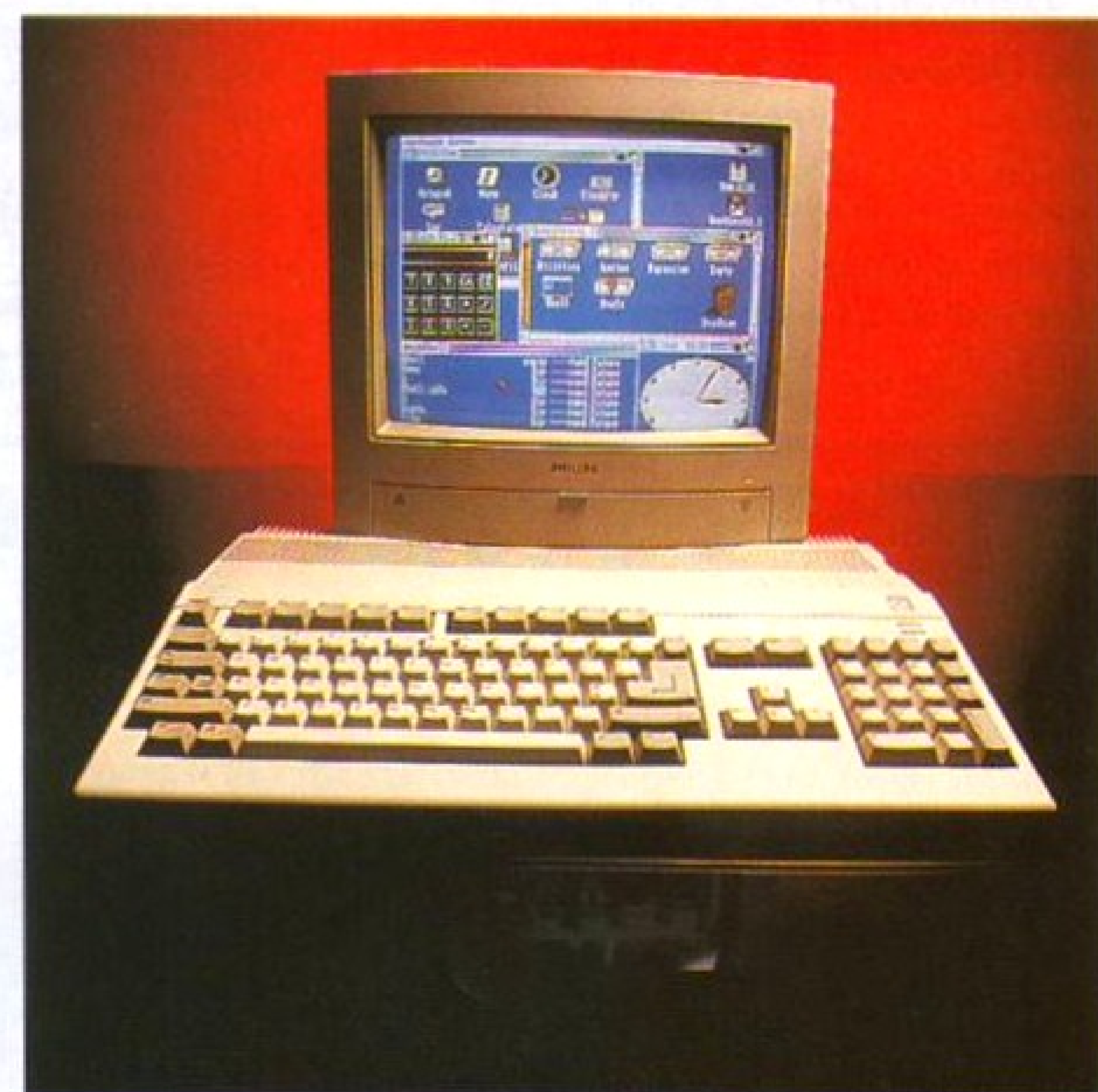
Please be aware that if you want to get Commodore's ideas on programming the Amiga (and as they make the thing they are in the best position) then call 0628 770088 and ask about becoming a registered developer. This will cost you £100 or so – but how much is your time worth?

Q When Workbench 1.3 was released, I got a Kickstart jumper board so I could still use all my old 1.2 software. Can I do this with Workbench 2.0, and still use my 1.3 software?

A Sort of. A Kickstart jumper board has sockets for two ROM chips (say the 1.3 and 2.0 ROM chips) and a switch. Usually the switch is mounted on the outside of the machine (not a difficult job if you're a hardware buff of any description – it's only a switch). To choose between which system you use, just turn the computer off, flick the switch and turn on again. The problem is that Commodore haven't changed the ROM chip. A jumper board for the new Denise chip would be very similar to the board that's described above, but an Agnus jumper board would be very difficult to make (it's differently shaped and doesn't have pins as such, just contacts). So you would really be stuck with just one version of the Agnus chip (8272 Fatter Agnus or new 8375 HR Agnus – both have the ECS).

Mind you, the Agnus chip doesn't appear to cause much incompatibility – it's Denise and the Kickstart ROM that cause most of the problems. So a ROM board plus Denise board will sort you out. I regret that I cannot tell you where to buy one from, as the need has only just appeared.

A500



Having proved its appeal many times over since being released in the late Eighties, the A500 can be upgraded internally to nearly as good as an A500P. The main difference is that expansions which fit in the trapdoor slot are not compatible between the two machines. If you're using one of these and you want a better Workbench, think about upgrading.

Q Is the new Agnus chip in the A500P the same as in the A3000 to give 2Mb of chip RAM, and if so will it be fitted to new A500s, A2000s and A1500s too?

A This a good question. The chip is definitely different (the A3000 we have in the office

sports an 8372B) but the exact differences are unknown, at least to me. Whether it will be a new standard Agnus chip or whether it supports 2Mb of chip RAM – I just don't know! Sorry.

Usually, though, Commodore put a given Agnus chip into a given Amiga for reasons of finance (newer versions cost a bit more money). So it could well be the case that the A500 Plus's Agnus (8375 HR) just gives 1Mb of chip RAM. However, it does give you an extra 1Mb of memory expansion (this will soon be available in the form of the A501 Plus memory expansion), and it has the ECS, so it's clearly much better in some ways.

The Public Domain program SysInfo (soon to go onto an *Amiga Format* Coverdisk) reveals all the internals of any Amiga – including the new 8373 Denise – but saw the 8375 HR Agnus as a more normal 8372 1Mb chip RAM Agnus. The plot thickens, and that's the best answer that I can possibly give you at the moment.

A500Plus



Breaking onto the scene in the Nineties, the A500P retains the external styling of the A500. The visible differences are the smaller Return key (with a blank key next to it) and a sticker saying A500P! If you've just obtained one of these by whatever means, think twice about returning it - do you need all your old software? This is the Amiga of the future.

Q What advantage does the new ECS give? I already have an 8372 Fatter Agnus chip with ECS, and I am wondering what an 8273 Denise and Workbench 2 will give me.

A More graphics modes. All the old graphics modes are there, but there are some new ones. SuperHires gives a four-colour display over 1280 X 256/512 in interlace, meaning the pixels are very thin and very tall. It's quite excellent for titling videos – *Broadcast Titler 2* can use this mode to best effect, changing the colours on every scan line to give gorgeous displays.

Productivity mode gives 640 by 512 (normally an interlace mode, that is flickery). However, you DON'T need a flicker fixer to use Productivity mode – all you need is a multisync monitor (and these are about £100 more expensive than your average monitor). The mode can be interlaced to 1024, but then it flickers without a flicker fixer.

Productivity mode gives an excellent display for word processors and desktop publishing. The extra horizontal resolotion means that high resolution pixels are square, making high resolution a viable option at not much more expense.

Finally there's A2024 mode, named after the monitor you need to see it. Giving over an incredible one million pixels and four shades of grey, I can't wait to see some programs that use it. They're going to be very good indeed.

Q Will Workbench 2 be available on the A1500? I'm thinking of upgrading to one, but I don't want to jump the gun.

A Yes, the new operating system will become the standard for all Amigas. It may take Commodore a couple of months to actually start selling them, but the arrival of the A500 Plus means that Workbench 2 will be the standard, and Workbench 1.3 will be gradually phased out.

Q I've happily been using my A500 for a couple of years, and then Commodore release the A500 Plus. If I want to have an up-to-date Amiga I'm going to have to spend money. Is this going to happen again in a few years' time? Were Commodore not making enough money?

A In broad terms, hardware (chips and so on) get cheaper while software (programs and games) get bigger but a lot more expensive. A set of five 16K ZX81 games would cost about a fiver 10 years ago. A 1Mb game of today costs around the £25 mark. You get more, but you have to pay more.

The whole idea of the Amiga system is that you can upgrade to keep up with the current trends in new technology. An A500 of four years ago can be upgraded to Workbench 2 and the ECS. However a ZX81 of ten years ago remains in a car boot at a car boot sale.

Look at it from Commodore's point of view. The Amiga is doing really well, but it is facing competition from the consoles below and the AT PCs from above. Commodore don't want to be doing just as well in the next few years, they still want to be way in the lead.

The only way to do this is to keep the Amiga better than anything else for the same price. Which means tarting up Workbench and waving goodbye to the long-standing bugs in AmigaDOS. Put 1Mb in as standard, make the video signal even better by redesigning the video display chip, make the total expansion memory a bit bigger... it all makes sense.

As technology marches on, more Amiga updates will happen every few years. These are difficult times for everyone involved on the Amiga scene, but these things tend to settle down very quickly.

Q Does Amos work on the A500P and Workbench 2?

A Seems to! I ran a few Amos programs on the Plus and they worked fine. No doubt there will be a couple of exceptions, but I'm sure Francois Lionet will update AMOS yet again to cover minor problems.

Q Is an A500 Plus better than an A500?

It will be. Going from one machine to the other will be slow at first, because there won't be a lot of A500s in the country. After a slow start, things tend to accelerate very quickly on the Amiga scene.

Q What expansions are not compatible between the A500 and A500 Plus?

A I'm afraid I really haven't had time to sit down and test all the ones that are available, but in general the situation appears to be this: most expansions that plug into either the left-hand side of the A500 (expansion bus) or the underneath (trap-door slot) are NOT compatible. The Action Replay 2, all internal memory expansions, and the KCS Bitcon PC emulator do not work.



The Action Replay II cartridge and the A500Plus are definitely not compatible! The Amiga simply refuses to boot if it detects the ARII's presence.

Having said that, in all cases, the manufacturers are presently furiously engaged in producing new Plus versions of their expansions. Commodore themselves are producing new trap-door memory expansions to give 2Mb of RAM.

Some memory expansions and hard disk systems that go into the expansion bus appear to be compatible, but again I cannot confirm this. I believe that by and large, memory expansions are not compatible, but hard disk systems are.

Q Commodore have shown a willingness to improve the machine. What future changes to the Amiga should we expect?

A Crytal ball time, huh? The biggest contender for the next Amiga upgrade is the sound chip, Paula. At present Paula will play up to four eight-bit samples at the same time, giving an excellent sound quality not found on computers in the same price bracket. However, rumours are rife about a new Paula chip presently on CBM's drawing boards. The number 16 is bandied about, but nobody is quite sure whether the new chip has: a) 16 sound channels or; b) 16-bit sampling or; c) both.

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HARDWARE COMPATIBILITY IS not likely to be too much of a problem with the A500 Plus. Anything that plugs into the back or the side of the Amiga will work fine: we've tested stuff like hard and floppy drives without any problems. The exception is the Datel Action Replay cartridge, which will not work with Kickstart 2.

Only stuff that plugs into the trapdoor slot under the Amiga could have problems, because the physical connector has changed as well as the way the circuit board works. If you own a 500 Plus this will only bother you if you had an Amiga before and want to keep something. All the same, many boards will still work: if they didn't use all the connections on the trapdoor connector, they could still plug in fine. If so, up to a Meg of expansion memory may be recognised as Chip RAM. But it's a bit of a grey area.

Apart from that, plenty of new Plus-compatible boards will soon appear. This problem will only affect Pluses because of the different physical design: other Amigas updated to Workbench 2 and ECS will have no problems.

It's software that will have most problems, and not just on the Plus but on any Workbench 2 Amiga. Most serious software, which runs from the Workbench, should be fine: it's likely to have been written 'legally' (according to Commodore guidelines) and serious developers have been aware of Workbench 2 on the Amiga 3000 for the last year.

Games stuff will suffer the most. Games programmers have a habit of doing things their own way which, while it often gives improved results, also has inherent problems when there's a change to the operating system or, even worse in this case, the hardware.



There are certainly compatibility problems with the A500 Plus: some software and hardware won't work with it. But don't panic! All you need to do is keep a clear head and check here before you buy.

OK so it looks like an A500, but that doesn't necessarily mean that all your software will run on it. The ECS has caused more than a few programs to experience difficulties running on an A500Plus, but the picture is not as bad as some people would have you believe.

Inside the new Amiga: compatibility

It's likely that most of the software compatibility problems will arise for one of four reasons. These can affect serious software as much as games.

One: the system-legal stuff has not been developed in accordance with Commodore guidelines for 2.04, issued to developers 14 months ago.

Two: because the program's memory-handling does not allow for the extra 512K of Chip memory. This problem will crop up on many graphics-related programs.

Three: the ECS Denise and Agnus chips work slightly differently, so programs that go direct to the hardware might go wrong.

Four: because the new disk-handling system may have problems with weird disk formats, very commonly used as part of the protection system for games.

The next problem is the one most likely to afflict serious software, the trouble being that the software will load and run fine, but not function correctly. A good example of this is *Deluxe Paint*, which will think it has only 512K to work in, not recognising the extra 512K of chip RAM.

Any program that has this problem is certain to be upgraded and the upgrade supplied at no cost to the user. But many developers, particularly the Americans, have been producing software with the A3000 in mind for some time and clearly labelling their packaging with the AmigaDOS 2 compatible symbol. Buy in confidence where you see that sign!

Games software houses are now testing all their new releases on the A500 Plus, but they've been curiously slow in catching on. Only last month we printed a letter from a disgruntled A3000 owner called Steve Lomas who said: "There is enough software, including games, that does not run to convince me that sloppy coding and over-elaborate protection systems are responsible."

A DEALER CHECKS

Many dealers have large stocks of older games and are checking furiously. Claims from dealers in the trade press that only 5 in 50 titles would run proved to be highly exaggerated when it emerged that those 50 titles were all from compilations, where special disk protection systems are likely to give trouble. Here's a few titles that Gordon Harwoods have found to be non-runners.

Out Run Europa, TV Sports Football, Weird Dreams, Ghouls and Ghosts, Kick Off 2, Turbo Out Run, Gremlins 2

Two of these – Weird Dreams and Kick Off 2 - are on the official OK list from Commodore. The discrepancy is probably explained by the fact that Harwoods tested the compilation versions.

Commodore are keen to point out that they supplied information on the new 2.04 system to registered developers 14 months ago. But even a top publisher like Ocean is not a registered developer, despite the fact that it costs only £100 a year. And many companies have simply ignored the possibility that Workbench 2 would appear.

"A lot of publishers seem not to want to become developers: maybe they don't want to pay £100, or maybe they don't want to sign non-disclosure agreements," comments Commodore's Kelly Sumner.

"Why shouldn't someone who has an Amiga 3000 be able to play a particular game? If I myself were a commercial publisher, I would certainly want to make sure my product worked on all Amigas, otherwise I'm limiting my market. The end users knew that Workbench 2 was coming. Are you telling me that the developers didn't know?"

It's all very well apportioning blame. But what we need to know is what will and will not run. Commodore have tested hundreds of titles and we have printed their lists of what will and will not run so you can check. We've also got a few comments of our own to add, and some interesting details from a few other sources. So here comes the hard information…

Kickstart 2.0 Compatible Applications

3-D Professional
3-D Professional Ray Trace Module
688 Attack Sub

A

A501-Plus 512 RAM Board
AC/Fortran 77 V2.3
ADAPT
The Adventures of Sinbad
Advanced Ski Simulator
Advantage
Aegis AniMagic
Aegis Draw 2000
Aegis DrawPlus
Aegis Images
Aegis Sound Master
Aegis Spectracolor
Aegis Video Titler
Aegis Videospace 3D
Airball
Air Warrior
Amazing Spiderman
A-Max II
Ami Alignment System
Ami-Back
AmigaLogo
Amiga Monitor 1.13
AmigaTeX
AmigaTerm 1.2i
Analyzel v2.11
Anarchy
Animate 3D
Animation Station 1.1
Annals of Rome
Aquablast
Archipelagos
Arena
Arkanoid
Arkanoid II (Taito)
Arp Library File Requester (V34.1)
Art Department Professional 1.0.2
ATalk III
Audiomaster 1.00
Audiomaster II 1.00
Audiomaster III
Awesome

B

Baal
Backlash
B.A.D.
B.A.D. 4
Balance of Power, 1990 Edition
Ballistix
Bane of the Cosmic Forge
Bards Tale II, The Destiny Knight
Bars and Pipes v1.0e
B.A.T.
Batman - The Movie
Battle Chess
Battle Squadron
Battle of Britain
BattleTech
Battlehawks 1942
BattleTech - Cresaent Hawks
Baud Bandit 1.50
BBS-PC 4.04
Benchmark C Library for Modula-2 v1.00
Benchmark Modula-2 v1.0 (compiler 1.03)
Beyond Zork
Blitzdisk V2.0
Block Out
Blood Money
Bloodwych
Blue Angels
Blue Max
Boing
Borrowed Time
Broadcast Titler 2
Bubble Ghost
Budokan
Bureaucracy
The Butcher

C

Cadaver
Caligan
Calligrapher 1.05
Camelot
Cando
Captain Planet
CDDACtrl V0.417
CDROM-FS V0.668
CDxFilesystem
Champions of Krynn
ChessMaster 2000
ChessMaster 2100
Chuckie Egg
Cinelink
City Defence
City Desk V2.0
CLI-Mate
Clown-o-Mania
Codename: Iceman
Comicsetter
Cray Cars
CrossDOS v3.06 and v4.0
Curse of the Azure Bonds 1.0
Cybernoid
Cybernoid II - The Revenge
CygnusEd Pro II
CygnusEd Professional Release 2.12

D

Dark Castle
Das Boot
Datastorm
Days of Thunder
DCTV v1.0
Deep Space
Defender of the Crown
Deluxe Music Construction Set 1.0
Deluxe Paint II
Deluxe Paint III
Deluxe Paint IV
Deluxe Photo Lab
Deluxe Print II
Deluxe Video V1.06
Demon's Winter
Design Works V1.0
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Digi View Gold
DigiPaint 3
The Director
Diskis BooksDisney Animation Studio
Disk Mechanic 3.0
Distant Suns
DME 1.29
Doctor Ami...
Double Dragon
Downhill Challenge V1.0
Dr Plummets House of Flux
Dr T's Copyist
Dr T's Deluxe Editor/Librarian
Dr T's KCS
Dr T's Tiger
Dr T's Tiger Cub
Dr T's Level II
Dragon Force v1.02
Dragon Scape
Dragon's Lair II: Escape from Singe's Castle
Dragons of Flame
DragonStrike
DSM 1.0d
Duck Tales: Quest for Gold
Dungeon Master
Dungeon Master Assistant
Dungeon Master Assistant Vol II
DynaCADD
DynaCADD 2.0

E

EDLP V3.00
Elan Performer
Elf
Excellence! 1.12
Excellence! 2.00
Express Paint 3.0.46
Eye of the Beholder

F

F-15 Strike Eagle II
F/16 Combat Pilot 1989
F-19 Stealth Fighter 1.0 (NTSC Release)
F29 Retaliator
F40
F/A 18 Interceptor
FACC II
Falcon 1.1
Fantavision
Ferrari Formula 1
FileZap 3.0
FirePower
Flight of the Intruder
Flight Simulator II
Flood
Flow 2.01 and 3.0
Font Works Version 1.0
Forms in Flight II
Framegrabber 256
Fright Night
Full Metal Planet
Fun School 3 (Over 7s)
Fusion Paint 1.05 and 1.08
Future Wars

G

Gauntlet II
Gettysburg
GFA BASIC Compiler V3.5
Globulus
Gold Disk Office
Gold of the Americas
Graphics Starter Kit
The Graphics Studio
Greg Norman's Shark Attack Ultimate Golf Sim
Guild of Theives
Gunship

H

HAM-E
Harley Davidson: The Road to Sturgis
Heart of the Dragon
Heros of the Lance
Hero's Quest I
Hex
High Speed Pascal V1.5
HiSoft Basic V2.0
HiSoft DevPac v2.0 and v3.0
Hole-in-One Miniature Golf
Home Office
Hot Licks V2.02
Hound Of Shadow
Hunter
Hybris
Hyperbook

I

IK+
Imagelink
Imagine 1.0
Interceptor
The Immortal
Imperium
Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade
Indianapolis 500
Infestation
InfoFile
Insanity Fight
International Championship Wrestling
Interphase
Into the Eagles Nest
IntroCAD
IntroCAD Plus
Ishido

J

Jack Nicklaus Greatest 18 Holes Golf
Jack Nicklaus Unlimited Golf
Jet
The Jetsons •

THE OFFICIAL FAILURES

Out of around 800 titles they have checked, Commodore have found only ten they reckon don't work. Here's the list.

SWIV, Double Bill, Fantasy World Dizzy, Treasure Island Dizzy, Grandstand, Compilation, Lotus Esprit Turbo, Bubble Bobble, Super Grand Prix, Midwinter 1, Turbo Out Run

US GOLD CHECK THEMSELVES

Top UK games producers US Gold are one of the software houses who are catching up fast by checking and updating their back catalogue. Most of their games work, including faves like Monkey Island, Operation Stealth and James Pond. Older titles on the Kixx budget label are particularly prone to problems, as you would expect.

Don't work

Moonshine Racers, Stormball, Turbo Outrun, Cybercon 3, some of Coin-op Hits compilation (Dynasty Wars, Ninja Spirit and Ghouls 'n' Ghosts), some of Super Sim compilation (Italy '90 Winners, Airborne Ranger), Final Fight, Outrun Europa, Axel's Magic Hammer, Games Winter Edition, Crime Wave, Blasteroids, Barbarian 2, 1943, Impossible Mission 2, Super scramble Simulator, Heroes of the Lance, Out Run, Skidz, Street Fighter, Road Blasters.

US Gold have ensured that Out Run Europa will work on release and are updating Final Fight and Cybercon III immediately.

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AMIGA FORMAT FINDS SOME SURPRISES

We checked all the games in the current issue and a few from the previous couple, and came up with a few surprises...

Work

Rugby World Cup (Domark), Crimetime, Lords of Doom, Last Ninja 3, Magic Pockets, Robin Hood, Thunderhawk, Utopia, Jimmy White's Snooker, Utopia, Magic Garden, Volfied, First Samurai, Executioner, Kid Gloves, Sarakon, Cruise for a Corpse, Challenge Golf, Billiards 2 Sim, Magnetic Scrolls collection, Terminator 2: Judgement Day.

Don't work

Football Director 2, Shadow Sorceror, Knights of the Sky, Llamatron, Super Space Invaders, Lotus 2, Robocod, Soundware Cricket, Shadow Sorceror, Impossamole, Deadline, Championship Athletics, Charge of the Light Brigade, Cardinal of the Kremlin, Battle Chess 2, Zone Warrior.

Many of the non-workers are very aged games on budget which are less likely to work anyway. But some of them are top new titles. These we had pre-release copies of: the software houses are aware of the problem and will ensure Workbench 2 compatibility before they release them.

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Letters

If you think that there's something that just has to be said, then why not let us and the rest of the Amiga-owning world hear what it is? Send in your comments, praise, gripes and amusing computer anecdotes to us at **Letters, Amiga Format, Bath BA1 2BW.**

CD CON

What's all the hype about CD players with 16-bit overs ampling and 8-bit read-outs as compared to 1-bit professional 16-bit over scanning with the CDTV drive? Tell me straight: how much better is a standard Hi-Fi CD player than a CDTV ROM drive? Also, how about this for an idea: Since 80 per cent of the population already own CD players, why doesn't somebody bring out an interface which allows you to use CDTV titles with your Amiga using a standard CD player?

Why is Commodore charging about £350 for a sub-standard CD player when you can get a proper one for about £100 in Currys?

ALISTAIR ROBERTS, FIFE

To begin with, 1-bit professional is the very latest in CD technology, so you'd be lucky to get that quality for £100! Having an interface between your CD Hi-Fi and Amiga is a nice idea, but the problem is that you just wouldn't have the control of the laser-scanning head which is required to access CD ROM data. To get this would require you to dismantle both your CD player and your Amiga!

MIDI MOAN

The Amiga is, overall, a better machine than the Atari ST, but because Commodore are lacking in grey matter there isn't a built-in MIDI interface in the Amiga and so nothing decent has been written for serious MIDI users like myself. If any Amiga owners want a fight about it then I suggest they take a look at *Cubase* on the ST - there's nothing to touch it on the Amiga.

DALE COLLINS, SOUTHAMPTON

The trouble with having a built-in MIDI interface is that the specifications are pretty simple (even the ST has add-on MIDI units). As to the point about there being no serious MIDI programs for the Amiga, check out the KCS *review on page 178.*

WHO'S THAT MAN?

OK, so who's the *Doctor Who* fan? Is it Maff Evans? If so good on you! *Doctor Who* happens to be the best show in the world. In the latest issue (issue 24) of *Amiga Format* I noticed heaps of *Doctor Who* references. Keep up the good work!

What happened to the Workbench hacks on the Coverdisk? Please bring them back.

KEITH WALKER, AUSTRALIA

Well spotted! In answer to your question, yes. Maff is the Doctor Who *fan (is that enough references to* Doctor Who*? Yes? Good! In answer to your question about the Workbench hacks, the simple fact is that we just don't have enough space on the disk for them*

SAMURAI HERO



This could be the end of civilisation as we know it! It appears that there's something *Amiga Format* doesn't know about the Coverdisk demo of First Samurai.

The instructions state the demo is over when you reach a place where you use the logs but they don't do you any good. Presumably this is where you need four logs to bridge the waterfall but you've only got three. Which makes it impassable, doesn't it? No it doesn't.

Keep walking until you are just past the end of the last log and then jump. You'll fall off and get killed, but keep doing it and you'll find that if you time it just right he gets across in one piece. It has to be one continuous movement (walkjump) - it doesn't work if you pause before jumping.

Once over, keep walking until you reach a place (on the next screen) where a narrow band of sky extends to the bottom of the screen. Fall down that, facing left until you reach a pillar on the left: it's about five floors down. You can now do one of two things.

Walk left to the waterfall and you'll meet the dragon, which I presume is the end-of-level guardian: or move over the object near the pillar (it looks like weapons when you haven't enough power to pick them up and has four stars circling it) and press fire. You'll hear a burst of white noise and a message appears saying: Congratulations! Press fire for next sub level.

Press fire and you are now on a completely different level. From watching the demo I suspect that there may even be yet another level after this one but I'm not sure as this level is so hard I haven't finished it yet.

DAVE BLAIR, CRAMLINGTON

Amazing. We knew this was a pretty stunning demo, but not that there was so much to it. You'll probably find that this extra bit is not tweaked and won't really be playable, and in the disk space available there's unlikely to be any more. We could phone Vivid image and ask them, but it's nice to leave it as a mystery…

THE HARD FACTS

It's time for you to wake up! It seems that you think that there are only A500, A1500 and A2000 Amigas. I have an A3000 and I want to know if the software I'm reading about in *AF* works on my machine and whether it's hard drive installable. It can't be hard to test all software on the A3000. Take a look at your review of *Search for the King* (issue 24) you wrote that 'the long loading delays ruin continuity and kill the game's atmosphere.' What would the verdict look like if Trenton had played the game from a hard drive (I guess he didn't know that it was installable)? This is a typical example of why you should write whether the

AF BY MAIL

You can actually make life a lot easier for us and make certain of getting a reply if you make darned sure you're addressing your letter to the right person or place, so here's a guide to what to send where. We can never give personal replies by mail, so don't send us a stamped-addressed envelope: and we can under no circumstances give personal replies by fax.

WORKBENCH

If you have any problems with the technical side of your Amiga, with hardware or with serious software, write to Pat and he'll try to answer you. Alternatively, if you have any advice for others or any handy tips to share, send it in and you could win a prize.
PAT MCDONALD, WORKBENCH,
AMIGA FORMAT, 30 MONMOUTH STREET, BA1 2BW

GAMEBUSTERS

If you've just found the cheat mode, mapped out the levels or found all the passwords for the latest game – whatever the game cheat, send it to Maff and you could win a prize. Also, if you're stuck somewhere, ask the Helping Hand section in Gamebusters for advice – or if you've read of a problem in Helping Hand that someone else has and you can solve it, then send in the answer to win a prize!
MAFF EVANS, GAMEBUSTERS (OR GAMEBUSTERS HELPING HAND), AMIGA FORMAT, 30 MONMOUTH STREET, BA1 2BW

LETTERS

The Letters pages are for you to air your views and share your opinions: please remember not to ask questions that should be in Workbench! What Damien is looking for are thought-provoking or entertaining letters, if they're short there's a better chance they'll get in. Prizes for the best two. LETTERS, AMIGA FORMAT, 30 MONMOUTH STREET, BA1 2BW

COMPETITIONS

To enter a competition, write the answers and your name, address and phone number on the back of a postcard or a stuck-down envelope and send it in. don't put several entries in together, or include entries with letters to any other part of the mag.
COMPETITION, AMIGA FORMAT,
29 MONMOUTH STREET, BATH BA1 2AP

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If you have a problem with companies advertising in *Amiga Format* – you're cheque's been cashed but you've had nothing or whatever – our advertising department should be able to help. Write telling them briefly about the problem and which company it concerns.
AMIGA FORMAT ADVERTISING COMPLAINTS DEPT, FUTURE PUBLISHING, 30 MONMOUTH STREET, BATH BA1 2BW

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If you've ordered anything from the *Amiga Format* Mail Order section and you've got a problem, please remember that we on the magazine don't deal with it at all. Write to them at our Somerton address or phone 0458 74011.
AMIGA FORMAT MAIL ORDER,
THE OLD BARN, SOMERTON, SOMERSET TA11 7PY

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Similarly, if you move house and want to make sure your copy of the mag catches up with you, then send the new address to AMIGA FORMAT SUBSCRIPTIONS, THE OLD BARN, SOMERTON, SOMERSET TA11 7PY

FAULTY COVERDISKS

The disks are duplicated and stuck on the magazine by a firm who we employ for that specific purpose. If you have a faulty disk, send it to them enclosing an SAE. We don't keep stocks of disks, so we can't help.
DISKCOPY LABS, UNIT A, WESTMARCH, LONDON ROAD, DAVENTRY, NORTHANTS, NN11 4SA

REACHING US BY PHONE

The Amiga Format editorial team can only take enquiries from readers between 10.30am and 6.30pm on Tuesdays.

The Advertising department can help you with problems you may have with companies who advertise in the magazine if you call during normal office hours.

Our subscriptions service and the *Amiga Format* mail order department are not in the same building and should be contacted on 0458 74023.

software you are testing is installable. I want to know that this is possible *before* buying a program and it's your job to inform us.

HENRY BLOM, SWEDEN

To tell the truth, we only recently managed to get hold of an A3000, but from now on we will be testing as much software as possible on the new machines. Obviously we can't test everything - there just isn't enough time what with producing a magazine and all. As for the question of hard disk installable games, the aim of reviewing a game is to test it on the most basic machine possible, since the majority of users buying the game won't have a hard disk.

SHOULD BE READY NEXT THURSDAY

I bought an Amiga A500 in March 1991 and by July it had developed a minor fault. I returned it to the shop on July 23 and they in turn sent it to FMG. After reading the FMG adverts I expected to get my Amiga back in 12 working days. No such luck! It took 20 working days and it still didn't work. The shop told me to bring it back and they would return it to FMG.

As a simple repair job had already taken four weeks, I decided to phone Commodore and spoke to the Customer Liaisons Officer, Clare Rudd, complaining of the poor back-up service. She told me to return the machine to FMG and inform her of the repair number so that she could arrange a seven day priority for it. My Amiga was collected by FMG on August 22 and the repair number recorded by Mrs Rudd. By the end of August I still had no computer and several phone calls resulted in me being told that the people involved were on holiday.

As you can imagine I was not amused by the whole affair, so I contacted the Consumer Advice Trading Standards office. They told me that they would phone Commodore until it was sorted out. My computer finally arrived on September 10 and surprise, surprise it worked. All I have to do now is apply to Commodore to have the warranty extended for the amount of time under repair. Wish me luck!

T TOWNROW, MERSEYSIDE

Good luck.

A FIX IN TIME

I recently bought a 1.5 Mb internal expansion at a computer show. At the time I didn't know that fitting this type of expansion would invalidate my warranty, and when I inquired whether the machine would have to be taken apart to fit it I was assured that this was not necessary. You can imagine my horror when I arrived home, opened the box and find that it said 'FITTING THIS UPGRADE WILL INVALIDATE YOUR WARRANTY' on the back of the installation manual.

Never the less, I carefully took apart the computer and fitted the expansion, which involved removing the GARY chip and replacing it on the expansion board. I put the computer back together, plugged it in and... AAAAAGGGGGHHHH! I was confronted by a black screen. I turned off the expansion and guess what happened. Naff all.

I flicked through an old *Amiga Format* and found the official Commodore repair centre run by FMG. They came and picked up the Amiga by courier and in 12 working days they brought it back with a new mother board. My computer now works fine, so I thought I'd write this letter to tell you that FMG are not that bad, really.

MARCUS WETHERELL, SHEPPERTON

This goes to show that things are not always as bad as they seem. FMG will always do their best to repair machines in as little time as possible, but there are bound to be problems from time to time - they're only human after all! It seems as though poor Mr Townrow has been very unlucky with his machine, but this shouldn't put you off having your machine repaired by FMG. There are quite a few repair companies out there that are a lot worse.

GIVE ME SOMETHING MORE

Computer games range from the superb to the dire. But why is so much junk produced? Perhaps the following observations will be of interest:

1. Hands up all those who, when they pick up a book time after time carefully check the author's name, the publisher, printer, illustrator and distributor, then go on to read the blurb on the jacket, the introduction, the foreword and the preface? What, no-one? Then why are we compelled to sit through several screens of the stuff whenever we boot up a game? Given a two-disk game, we may be confident that the game itself is only on the second, the first containing nothing but credits and a self-indulgent introduction. *Monkey Island* is a case in point. One could start it off and go to the pub while it grinds through the names of 70 odd people. Every game should utilise the Escape key to enable one to skip all this junk or better still keep the credits in their proper place - in the manual.

2. Bluntly stated - authors cheat. In the ladders and ledges type of game, invisible barriers, invulnerable opponents and inescapable traps are legion. In race games one may be going flat out only to be passed by a computer opponent hurtling along as if you are going backwards. In games of strategy, computer opponents have virtually unlimited resources and always have the element of surprise. I enjoyed *Railroad Tycoon* and don't really mind when the computer produces a mountain range in the English Fens, but I get furious when an opposing railway blithely skips along the highest peaks in America or builds a 100-mile bridge down the length of a river.

Part of the problem is caused by the concept of difficulty levels. Just as long as this idea has a strangle hold on the imagination of authors, so their offerings will be 'more of the same'. Cheat modes make my point. If a lot of computer games were not so difficult then magazines would not take up so much of their space with cheat modes and young hackers would not spend their time discovering them.

3. Far too many games are derivative. The market is awash with ladders and ledges games, for example, the only difference between them being their graphics and presentation. Personally I have vowed never to buy another. Long ago I made a similar vow in respect of adventure games, but *Monkey Island* made me change my mind (despite the foible mentioned earlier).

The tragedy is that the Amiga is a wonderful machine capable of great things. It - and we - are being short changed by designers trying to make a quick buck. It used to be said that the British make the world's best programmers, but as far as gameplay goes we haven't got a clue. Some of the best and newest ideas are coming from France. Perhaps what we need is French gameplay designers, Italian artists, British programmers, and American marketing - in that order and no other.

D R DAINES, CLEETHORPES

I'm inclined to agree with a couple of your earlier points, but it has to be said that the question of the

WELL, WE ASKED FOR IT...

For a few months now we've been asking you to fill in a quick questionnaire on these pages and return it to us. This helps us keep track of what you want from specific areas of the magazine but there's also a bit of room for your comments, particularly on what you most like and least like in a particular issue.

We thought it would be interesting to look at a few of the more frequently-occurring 'least likes'. For the time being, we're not going to make any comments ourselves: just present a cross-section of opinion. But if there's anything here you strongly agree or disagree with, do write in to Letters and let us know how you feel.

The advertisements - too many.

Previews - it's pointless.

Gamebusters - there's too much of it.

Not enough tips.

The muddly way it's put together.

The back page - it's naff.

All the things that are explained are too complicated.

Adverts that do not have anything to do with computers.

Marking system - it was more informative before the change in Jan 1991.

The games that you choose to review.

Too many game reviews.

The layout and typefaces you now use.

More PD reviews needed.

A beginners' section needed.

Letters.

Not enough letters.

Reviews of expensive serious software too short compared with game reviews.

The Coverdisk: more utilities, less game demos.

Gamebusters is too small.

You seem to be afraid of technical matters.

Not enough letters.

Lack of coverage for non-Amiga-specific hardware eg printers, monitors.

AMOS programming section needed.

Put page numbers on ads.

You have changed the physical size.

Technical aspect is being lost to aid beginners.

I hate music!

Too much expensive hardware reviewed.

Workbench

Answerfile

Not enough competitions.

How about an article on programming?

The general assumption that we know what you are talking about.

Very expensive software reviews.

Nothing!

nationality of programmers and designers is totally irrelevant. A good program is a good program, regardless of the borders surrounding its coders.

Returning to the point about overly long intro sequences and poorly balanced difficulty. These points are paramount in defining whether a game is good or bad, and here at Format *we try to take these elements into account when reviewing a game. However, when all is said and done the playability and enjoyment are the most important points and if a game includes both in abundance it can be forgiven a few quirks.*

The whole point of game cheats is to allow designers and coders to fully test all areas of the game. If they have to spend hours reaching the final level to test it out then this would waste a lot of development time!

VIDEO SCHOOL

I am teaching video at the Roveniemi Institute of Industrial Arts and Handicrafts and we are equipped with an Amiga fitted with a Magni board. I need to contact Gold Disk Ltd and NewTek, but their addresses are not published in your magazine. Could you please furnish me with them.

JOHN S COLLINS, FINLAND

Both companies are based on the other side of the Atlantic, unfortunately, so postage could be hefty! Gold Disk can be contacted at PO Box 789, Streetsville, Mississauga, Ontario, Canada L5M 2C2, while NewTek reside at 215 SE 8th Street, Topeka, KS 66603, USA. Alternatively, you could contact HB Marketing on 0753 686000.

MUSIC PLEASE

As someone with an interest in music and the use of an Amiga A500, I would like to buy a package which will enable me to create my own good quality sounds at home. I realise that I will have to upgrade the memory to 1 Mb, but apart from that I am unsure which software package would suit my needs. I would like something that I can use without any external keyboard, but would also have the capability if needed. It must also have drums and percussion and have a realistic, professional sound. I wonder if you could prod me in the right direction.

M NOTTINGHAM, BATH

Consider yourself prodded! If you look on the cover of this very issue you will find the program OctaMED. *This should pretty much cover your needs for the moment, since it contains the ability to use sampled sounds and user-defined synth sounds to produce music. If you want to sample your own sounds, then you'll have to get hold of a sampling package..* Technosound Turbo *is a good beginners' system which is available through* Amiga Format *mail order. You can also use* OctaMED *to play MIDI instruments using a MIDI interface (check the Datel ads for details of a good interface).*

THE TASK IS IN HAND

Since I frequently have to switch between word processing (*Kindwords 2*) and a database (*Superbase Personal 2*), I seem to spend an eternity waiting for our Amiga A500 (with half Mb expansion) to load and reload. My question is would I save time with a hard disk and would a further RAM expansion be any use?

BRYAN APPLEYARD, EPSOM

The answer to both questions is yes. Running with extra memory with the programs on hard drive means that you would be able to use the Amiga's multi tasking facility. All you'd have to do is use the window controls to switch between the programs, much as you would with directories on a disk.

DEFENDING MUSIC



I see that people are still sending in letters about games in songs. If you are not sick to death of them, I have another one. I found it in the January 18 1982 issue of *Time* magazine, which ran a story about video games. The song is by Pete Seeger and is about a boy named Steve Juraszek who rang up a score of 15,963,100 on *Defender* after playing for 16 hours and 34 minutes. I don't think that you will be able to find a copy of the record, but you can check the issue of *Time* magazine, if you like. Any chance of a T-shirt?

STEVE DALY, CORK

Well done Steve. This has to be just about the most in-depth and interesting letter we've had on the subject of games immortalised in songs. We particularly enjoyed the 'dum-de-dum' and 'plink-plunk' sections quoted in your transcript of the lyrics!

WHAT THE STRATEGY

I not be understand? Why to repeat players' guides the game *The Secret of Monkey Island* in August 91 for the magazines *Amiga Format* issues 24/25 and *Amiga Power* issue four? Is the one strategy for the readers only to purchase one magazine?

DUVAL LEMES DE OLIVIRA FILHO, BRAZIL

Yes... er... what was the question again?

EX-MUSIC CLUB

In the November issue of *Amiga Format*, Pat McDonald advised a reader to get in touch with Monumental Music Studios with regard to their *Music X* tutorial, My advice would be don't touch it!

On March 6 this year I answered an advertisement and ordered their *Music X* tutorial cassette plus four sample disks. Included with the order was a cheque for £30.70. The cheque was promptly cashed. The order was promptly ignored. Seven months later, despite several assurances from Monumental, I still have not received any of the goods. *Amiga Format*'s advertising department and the Gillingham Trading Standards Officer have also approached them and been given plausible excuses, but still no goods have been forthcoming. This is a disgraceful breach of the trust we must all place in mail ordering in the music and computer business and is the sort of practice that reflects badly on all companies, reputable or otherwise. In the long term this hurts all of us who are trying to make a living from computer music.

In answer to the reader's original question, work through the manual a little at a time with the program up and running. It will take time, as this is an immensely complex piece of kit. But then again, how long does it take to learn the piano?

PETER FLETCHER, MIDDLESEX

If anyone else is tempted by the Monumental Music ad, take heed of Peter's plight! Monumental Music are no longer dealing in the world of Amiga music, so any potential customers would be well advised to follow Peter's advice and study the information found in the excellent Music X *manual.*

WANTED!

Your honest opinion of AMIGA FORMAT

■ To help us keep improving your favourite magazine, please fill in and return this form each month

1.How did you buy this issue?
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❒ Newsagent delivered it to my home
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2. Rate *AMIGA FORMAT* in terms of value for money:
❒ Excellent! ❒ Good
❒ Reasonable ❒ Poor ❒ Ripoff!

3. Out of ten, how much did this month's cover make you want to look inside?

..../10

4. How much does this issue appeal to you overall?

..../10

5. How does it compare with previous issues you've seen?
❒ Much better! ❒ Slightly better
❒ About the same standard
❒ Slightly worse ❒ Much worse!

6. Rate out of ten this and any other computer magazines you read regularly:
AMIGA FORMAT ..../10
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..../10

7. Out of ten, how useful did you find this month's [main feature]? ..../10

8. What do you like *most* and then *least* about this issue?
I *most* like ....
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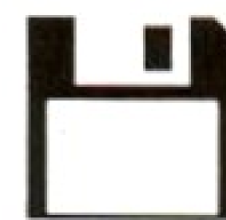
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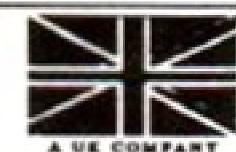
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More christmassy colours

Random Sample

The issue was finished so late we nearly had to have it induced...

Buzz!

Yes this is where we say what's big this month. Well this month it's a film, yes it's the sequel to Earl's Court I. It's the all new Earl's Court II: Verdict Days. It's starring the incredibly talented Amiga Format, with two outstanding leading ladies, those wise old actresses Amiga Shopper and PC Format, with cameo roles taken by that newcomer-with-an-attitude Amiga Power and not forgetting a surprise appearance by that little bambino: Commodore Format.

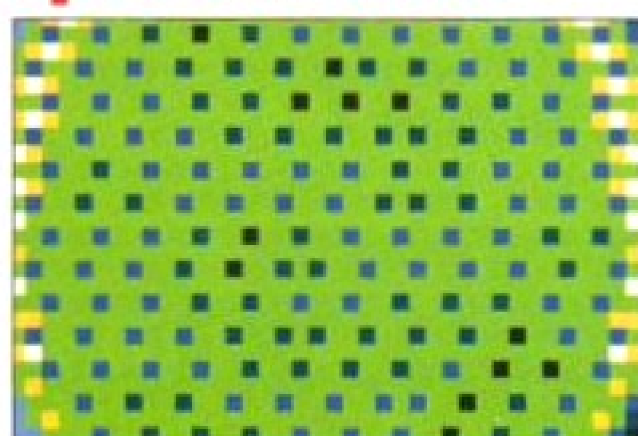
If you want an opinion...

Ask Frank. If anyone has any idea where the quote on our Contents page comes from just send us your entry in to Quote of the Month 29 at the usual address. If you don't know who it was, then make it up, we did.

Soundtracks

WHERE THE PYRAMID MEETS THE EYE – A TRIBUTE TO ROKY ERICKSON
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CAPTAIN PLANET EAT YOUR HEART OUT.

Spot the Shot



Yes you 've heard of spot the ball, well this is much the same only we don't get Robert Maxwell to pick our winning shots. Simply identify what game this wee snippet of computer graphics is from and send it in to our Bath address entitled Spot the Shot 29. Winner of Spot the Shot 6 (Eye of the Storm) and 28 (Utopia) are Colin Eberhardt from Cambridge and Graeme Wilson from Whitley Bay who both win Amiga Format T-shirts.

Phliers and Dulux winners

Now's the chance for the majority to say: "I never win anything". Yes the lucky winner of a day out on one of the country's most expensive flight sims is:Neal Balfour from London. The five runners up who win a copy of F-19 Stealth Fighter are Jamie Perry, S Pannell, Alan Peters, S Edwards and Bill Corbett . The three dudes who win a new Canon Ion camera are Paul Rose from Radlett, Mikhaell Michaelides from Ealing and Ms SJ Collins of Didcot. The 10 who pipped the post who get an Electronic Arts game of their choice are Simon Cardwell , Glendon Knight, C Volpe, Michael Watson, Derek Mann, David Hoole, James Daddy, JR Mitchell, Shaun O'Dell and Neil Roper. And to all those that didn't win... tough! You win some, you lose some.

Amiga Format

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DESIGNER Frank Bartucca
MANCHESTER CORRESPONDENT Asam Ahmad
CONTRIBUTORS James Leach, Neil West, Andy Hutchinson, Marcus Dyson, Frank Bartucca, Adrian Price, Mark Smiddy, Pat Winstanley, Brian Larkman,
ADVERTISING MANAGER Jonathan Bint
SENIOR SALES EXEC Duncan Ferguson
AD SALES EXEC Jackie Garford
AD PRODUCTION Nicola Lucas
PUBLISHER Greg Ingham
PROMOTIONS MANAGER Michele Harris
AD SERVICES Tamara Ward
PRODUCTION TECHNICIANS Simon Windsor, Chris Stocker, Jerome Clough, Simon Chittenden

PHOTOGRAPHY Ashton James, John King
COLOUR ORIGINATORS Marcus and Ben, Phoenix Repro
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NEXT MONTH

January's AF will be out on the 12th of December, making it a bit of a christmas issue, so we'll be doing the same stuff all the other magazines do, only better, that is taking a look back at the year, and choosing which were the best bits, and which bits we'd rather just forget about. We'll be naming our favourite bits of software and hardware in the vain hope that our mums will take notice and get us some of it for christmas. So Maff liked Deluxe Paint IV, Marcus thought the GVP Impact II 500 was quite tasty, Trent loved Eye of the Beholder, Damien was really impressed...

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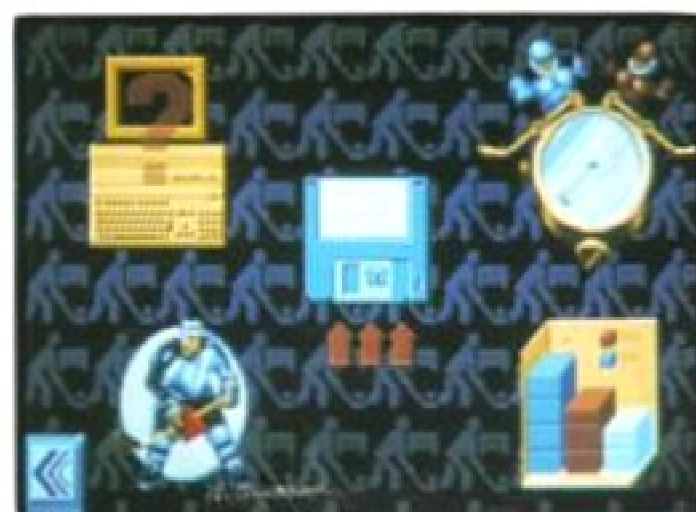
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Smarter still would be to see Page 188 now, to find out how a subscription can make your life easier and get you a free piece of software into the bargain!

FACE-OFF

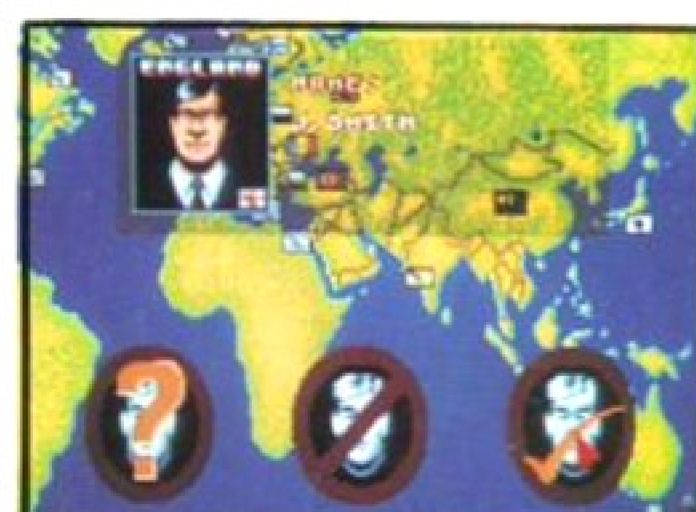
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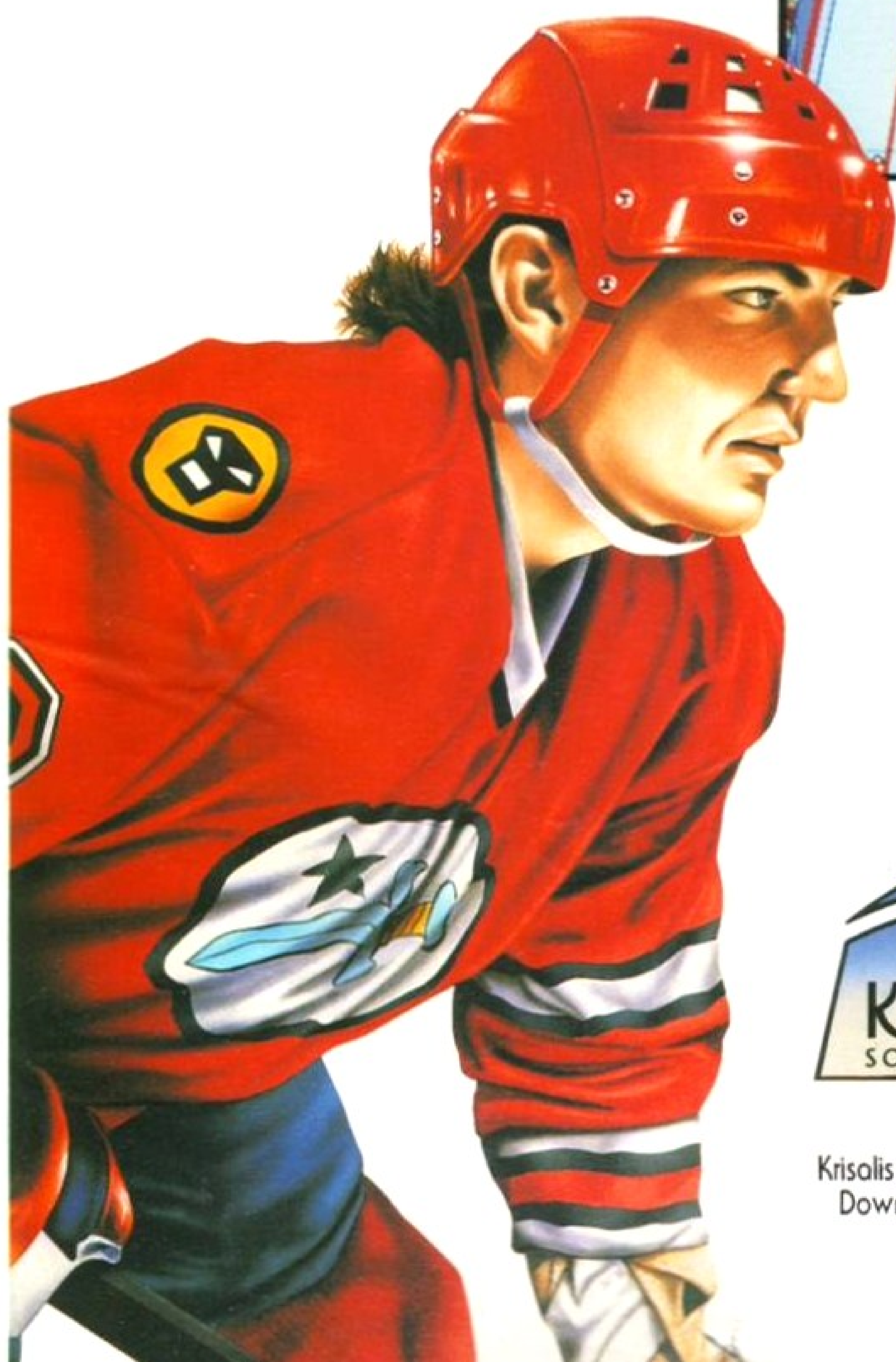








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